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HOW TO MAKE IT IN STYLE

HISTORY OF CHEESE
From churn to cheddar

ALL ABOUT HISTORY

THE GOOD, THE BARD & THE UGLY
Dark side of Shakespeare and Elizabethan theatre

OPERATION BARBAROSSA
How the brutal Nazi invasion of the USSR shocked Stalin and doomed millions

ANCIENT MEDICINE
10 remedies from around the world

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FUTURE
ISSUE 104

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Painting depicting the defence of the Brest Fortress by the Red Army. They held out for several days before Luftwaffe strikes ended their resistance

Welcome

How should we tackle the most confronting stories of history? As we looked to mark the 80th anniversary of the start of Operation Barbarossa and one of the most violent chapters of World War II this issue, I've been thinking about this quite a lot. History is obviously full of such stories, revealing the darkest hearts of humanity, but the 20th century has more than its fair share. There's something still very close about these events that, for me, demands a certain sensitivity.

But it also deserves an honest, open approach. Couching the events of this war, or any other, in less than forthright terms does a disservice to those involved. So as we looked to chronicle the early months of the Eastern Front and the mindset and weaponry involved, we also wanted to give space to the horrific ground-level experience. Hopefully we've done that in our piece, which you can start reading on page 26.

Given our rather weighty lead topic we wanted to offer some lighter reading this issue too, at least emotionally speaking. You can read all about the history of cheese, the squalid origins of Shakespeare and his contemporary playwrights, the strange ancient remedies that should probably be avoided, and the history of genies in Islamic culture. All fascinating in their own way and only a snippet of what you can look forward to in the following pages. I hope you enjoy them.

Jonathan Gordon
Editor

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Future Publishing Limited
Quay House, The Ambury, Bath, BA1 1UA

Editorial
Editor **Jonathan Gordon**
jonathan.gordon@futurenet.com
Art Editor **Kym Winters**
Features Editor **Callum McKelvie**
Staff Writer **Jessica Leggett**
Production Editor **Iain Noble**
Editor in Chief **Tim Williamson**
Senior Art Editor **Duncan Crook**

Contributors
Melanie Clegg, Catherine Curzon, Tom Garner, Robert Lebling, Kate Marsh, William E Welsh

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Advertising
Media packs are available on request
UK Commercial Director **Clare Dove**
clare.dove@futurenet.com
Senior Advertising Manager **Amanda Burns**
amanda.burns@futurenet.com
0330 390 6036
Account Manager **Garry Brookes**
garry.brookes@futurenet.com
020 3970 4176

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Operation Barbarossa

How the brutal Nazi invasion of the USSR shocked Stalin and doomed millions

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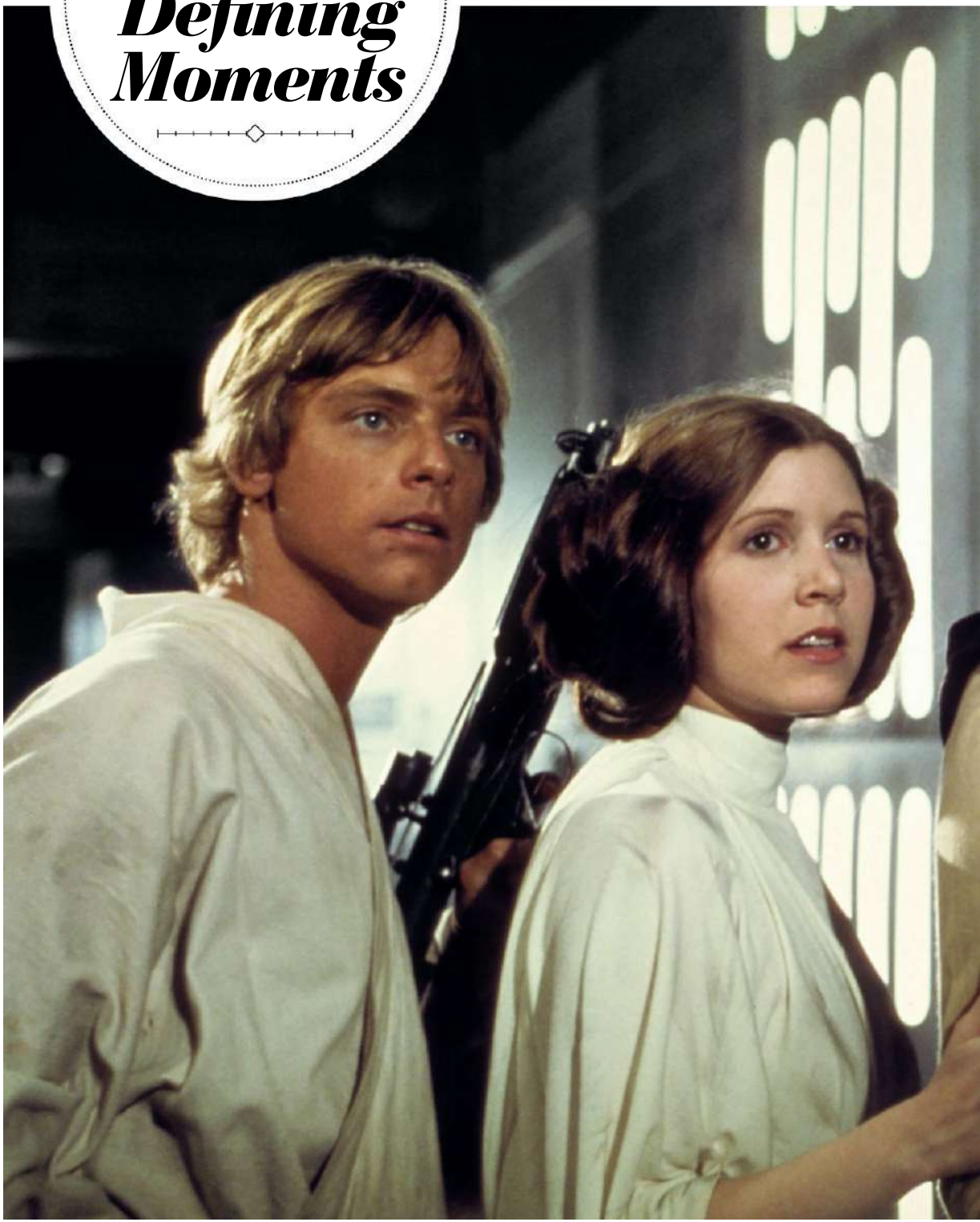
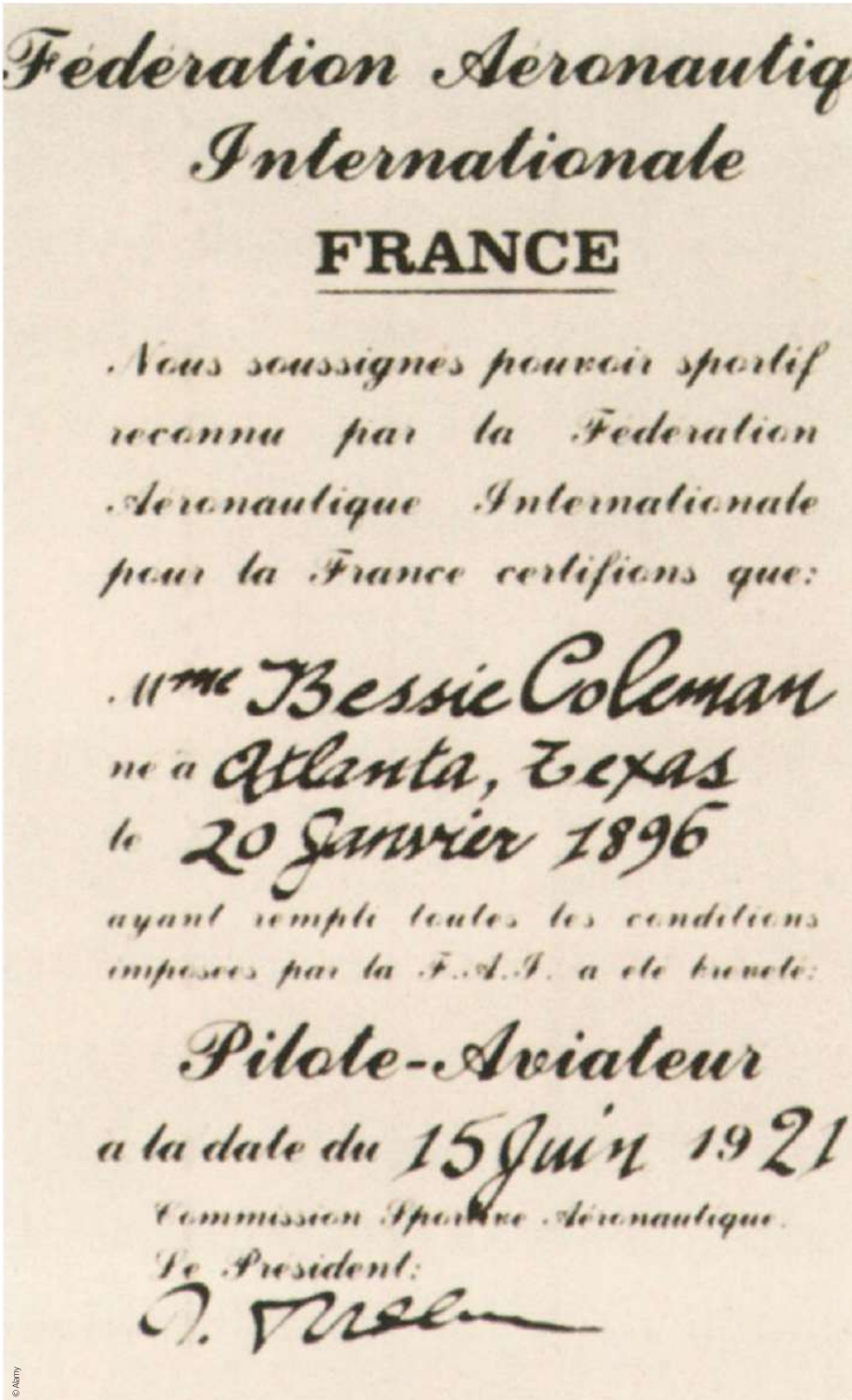
Defining Moments



25 May 1977

STAR WARS PREMIERES

Released in a limited number of theatres, George Lucas' *Stars Wars* quickly became a pop-culture phenomenon and a blockbuster hit. The film received critical acclaim and was celebrated for its groundbreaking visual effects, earning a total of six Academy Awards. Over four decades since the first film was released, the *Stars Wars* franchise remains as popular (and lucrative) as ever.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15 June 1921

BESSIE COLEMAN EARNS HER PILOT'S LICENCE

Coleman became the first African-American woman and the first Native American to gain her international pilot's licence. She earned it from the Fédération Aéronautique Internationale in France, as pilot schools in the United States had refused to train her. Known for performing dangerous stunts at air shows in the US, she died in a plane crash in 1926.

ue

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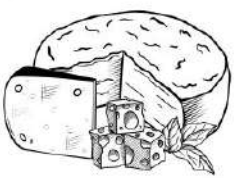

We chronicle the well-aged history of one of the world's most popular dairy products, from the ancient to modern world

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WHY CHEESE MATTERS

Main image source © Getty Images

Written by Jessica Leggett, Melanie Clegg

Key Events

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77CE ANCIENT ROMAN CHEESE

Roman chroniclers identified both hard and soft cheese, as well as varieties made from not just the milk of cows and goats but camels, assess, horses, hares and fawns. Something of a foodie, Pliny the Elder – writing in the 1st century CE – singled out the smoked goat's cheese of Rome as being the best of the bunch.

1546 THE CHEESE MOON

Although fables and mythology about the Moon being made of cheese have been in existence since antiquity, the earliest known written example dates from 1546 when John Heywood claimed in his *Proverbs* that "the Moon is made of green cheese".

Recent research has suggests that 13% of Americans still believe the Moon is made from cheese.

2x © Getty Images

DOMESTIC FARMING
8000 BCE

No one knows for certain when animals were first domesticated and farmed by humans for milk, meat and their skins, but it likely started around 8000 BCE.

EARLY CHEESE
2200 BCE

The first written evidence of cheese dates back to circa 2200 BCE in the ancient city of Ur in Mesopotamia. This early cheese was described as sour and salty with a texture similar to modern feta.

ANCIENT EGYPTIAN CHEESE
1200 BCE

Although it's suspected that cheese-making in Egypt has taken place for 5,000 years, the earliest known cheese is 3,200 years old and was discovered in 2018 in the Ancient Egyptian capital, Memphis.

8000 BCE — 6000 BCE — 2200 BCE — 1600 BCE — 1200 BCE — 800 BCE

THE INVENTION OF CHEESE
6000 BCE

According to archaeologists, there is evidence of cheese-making taking place in Poland, Croatia and Switzerland around 8000 years ago in 6000 BCE. This early form of cheese was made with clay sieves.

MUMMIFIED CHINESE CHEESE 1600 BCE

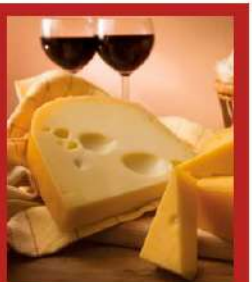
Scientists announced that they had discovered what they believed to be the earliest known cheese, which was made in around 1600 BCE, in the Taklamakan Desert in Xinjiang, China. The cheese, which was made with yeast rather than rennet, was found on the bodies of mummies.

CHEESE IN GREEK MYTHOLOGY 800 BCE

According to Ancient Greek mythology, the god Aristaeus, a son of Apollo and patron of cheese-making and beekeeping, is said to have discovered cheese in around 800 BCE.

1184 THE INVENTION OF GOUDA

Although cheese has been made and enjoyed since ancient times, the honour of being the oldest known cheese still in production goes to Gouda, which has been proudly made in the Netherlands since 1184. Traditionally, Gouda is made by women, who pass the secrets of the process to their daughters.



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MOZZARELLA IS FIRST RECORDED 1570

The spongy Southern Italian hero of the pizza topping, whose name is first recorded in 1570, is made using the milk of the buffalo. According to tradition, this conquering cow was introduced to the country by the invading Avars in the 7th century CE. They drove herds of Indian water buffalo with them from Central Asia.

THE FIRST MARGHERITA IS SERVED 1889

1889

Although there are hundreds of delicious things that can be made with cheese, it's likely that the most beloved is pizza. Although rudimentary versions of everyone's favourite cheese snack have been in existence since ancient times, the first pizza as we know it was made in 1889 in honour of Queen Margherita of Italy.

The earliest known form of pizza dates from 6 BCE, when Persian troops cooked flatbreads topped with cheese and olives on top of their shields.

FETA CHEESE IS CREATED 200 BCE

It's not known precisely when feta cheese was invented, as although the oldest possible reference comes from around 3000 BCE, the first unambiguous evidence of its existence is in the *De Agri Cultura*, which was written in 200 BCE in Rome.

THE INVENTION OF CHEDDAR 1100

Cheddar cheese has allegedly been produced in the village of Cheddar in Somerset since as early as 1100. According to tradition, the cheese had to be produced within 50km of Wells Cathedral.

THE INVENTION OF CAMEMBERT 1791

France's most famous stinky cheese, Camembert, was first made during the French Revolution in 1791 by Marie Harel, who adapted a recipe for Brie.

Image sources: wiki/Jonas Eppler, wiki/The York Project, 2x © Getty Images

200 BCE — 77CE — 700 — 1100 — 1184 — 1546 — 1570 — 1720 — 1889 — 1908

BRIE IS INVENTED 700

France's favourite cheese, Brie, has been made in the town of Meaux since the 8th century. It is said to have been so enjoyed by the Frankish Emperor Charlemagne that he ordered two cart-loads should be delivered to him every year.

THE EARLIEST AMERICAN CHEESE 1200

The earliest known evidence of cheese-making on the American continent dates back to 1200, when the Incas and other Andean cultures began to make cheese with llama milk.

MASS-PRODUCED CHEESE 1815

Although cheese has been a firm favourite since ancient times, the first factory for its mass production was not built until February 1815 in Switzerland.

Image sources: wiki/Marie-Lan Nguyen, wiki/Afonsopon

1720 STILTON IS INVENTED

Although there is some dispute about the origins of England's justly celebrated blue-veined Stilton cheese, it is most likely to have been invented in the early 1720s by the Leicestershire cheesemaker Frances Paulet and rapidly became so famous that Defoe described it as "English Parmesan" in 1724.

VEGAN CHEESE IS FIRST MADE 1908

1908

The first industrial manufacture of non-dairy cheese was recorded in 1908 when Chinese tofu evangelist Li Shenzing set up a factory in France to spread the word about beancurd. Adapting traditional Chinese techniques, he successfully produced dairy-free answers to Gruyere, Roquefort and Camembert. Today, the market for vegan cheese is valued at over $1 billion.

CHEESE-MAKING CHALET

Switzerland
18-19th century

Switzerland is renowned for its love of cheese. Archaeological evidence suggests that cheese has been made in the Swiss Alps since the Iron Age, during the first millennium BCE. Traditional Swiss cheeses include Emmental and Appenzeller, but it is Gruyère that is by far Switzerland's most widely produced and consumed cheese.

Existing sources tell us that Gruyère has been made in Switzerland since at least 1115, originating in the town of Gruyère, which is located in the canton of Fribourg. Cheesemaking was an ideal way to preserve the excess milk produced by the cows in the Alpine pastures, with cheese becoming a staple food for those living in the remote Alps.

By the 15th century, cheesemakers were selling their surplus cheese at markets. As demand for hard cheeses grew from the 17th century onwards, the cheese was officially named Gruyère and it was subsequently exported around Europe. Emigration from Fribourg between the 18th and 19th centuries led to the production of Gruyère also spreading to the areas of Bern, Vaud, Jura and Neuchâtel - all five regions continue to produce the cheese today.

However, the increasing number of imitations of Gruyère being produced outside of these regions - and with the town of Gruyère being so close to the Franco-Swiss border - led to a debate between Switzerland and France over who created the cheese. The argument lasted for over a century between 1890 to 2001, with Switzerland receiving the Appellation of Controlled Origin certification.

In 2011, Swiss Gruyère was also given the AOP 'protected designation of origin' label from the European Union, which ensures that the cheese is produced in the same region using traditional methods. An essential part of Swiss culture and cuisine, knowledge of Gruyère production has been passed down for generations. Today, 30,000 tons are produced annually and every authentic wheel has 'Le Gruyère AOP' inscribed on it.

TIME TO MATURE
The cheese is taken to a humid building, cellar or cave for ageing. The wheels of Gruyère cheese are kept on wooden shelves, which is still a requirement for them to be classed as Gruyère AOP today. The cheese is turned and brushed regularly to prevent unwanted bacteria growth.

CHANGE IN TASTE
Gruyère cheese has to be aged for a minimum of five months, but it can be left to mature for up to two years. Over time, the mild flavour of Gruyère changes and becomes more intense and full-bodied, while the texture becomes coarser.

SALTING THE CHEESE
After the cheese has been pressed, it is removed from the mould and placed in a salt brine bath for up to 24 hours. This helps to extract water from the outer layer of the cheese, helping to stabilise the rind, as well as prevent bacteria from growing on the cheese.

TRADITIONAL SETTING
Cheesemaking was done in Alpine chalets such as this one, with dairy cattle being brought up from lowland pastures so that cheese could be produced during the summer months. Today, cheesemaking chalets can still be found in use all over the alps. This particular illustration was inspired by engravings from the 18th and 19th centuries.

HIGH-QUALITY INGREDIENTS
The first step for making Gruyère cheese is milking the cows, usually located a short distance away from the chalet, in the morning. It is very important to use fresh, raw milk when producing Gruyère. The sweet grass of the Alpine pastures contributes to the flavour of the milk and therefore the flavour of the cheese.

SHAPING THE CHEESE

The cheesecloth is used to scoop up the curd inside the copper vat before it is carefully placed inside circular cheese moulds. The cheesemaker then presses down on the curds to remove some of the excess whey. It is also at the point where identifiers for the batch manufacturing date and the cheesemaker are added to the cheese.

MAKING THE CURDS

The enzymes of the calf rennet help to curdle the milk after 30 to 45 minutes and then a curd cutter is used to slice the curd into smaller pieces. Once the curds have been cut to the right size, the cheesemaker uses a paddle to stoke the fire to increase the heat.

HEATING THE MILK

The cow's milk is heated in a copper vat hung over a fire in the middle of the chalet, before calf rennet is added to trigger coagulation. Using a copper vat is still required by AOP specifications today, although it must only be used once a day. Copper fights off particular microorganisms and contributes some oxidation, which adds to the flavour of Gruyère.

QUALITY CONTROL

Once the temperature has been raised the vat is stirred constantly, and traditionally the cheesemaker would check the temperature by using their elbows. They would then grab a handful of curds and squeeze them to check that they are the right texture and consistency for Gruyère.

PRESSING THE CHEESE

After the cheesemaker has filled the cheese mould, it is placed in a wooden cheese press and pressed overnight to remove as much of the whey as possible. This allows the cheese wheel to solidify.

Illustration by Adam Mann

Anatomy

DAIRYMAID

England
c.5th – 20th century

KEEPING QUIET

Knowledge about cheese-making was passed down through generations of women and from one dairymaid to another. Cheese was an important commodity and family recipes and techniques for cheese-making were often closely guarded secrets, allowing dairymaids to maintain their authority over it.

ETYMOLOGY

The word 'dairy' is derived from the Old English word for 'female servant'. Dairy work was traditionally undertaken by women, partly because they cost less to hire than men and therefore saved their employers' money. It was important to hire good dairymaids and often women were involved in the hiring process.

USING INTUITION

Dairymaids relied on their experience when it came to cheese-making, such as using their fingertips to assess the temperature of the milk. However, it could be difficult to ascertain the temperature properly depending on the weather, with some dairymaids starting to use thermometers during the 19th century.

EXTRA INCOME

Dairymaids would frequently sell any surplus cheese or butter that they had made at the market to bring in more money for their family. During the Middle Ages, cheese could also be used by peasant families as payment to their manor lords if necessary.

CHANGING TIMES

For centuries, dairymaids had used various methods and techniques for cheese-making, which produced different results. In the 18th century, scientific men of the Enlightenment wanted to apply technological innovations to standardise cheese production, but dairymaids refused to take their advice.

EVERYDAY DUTIES

It was the dairymaid's job to milk the cows and make butter, cream and cheese for their home or for the upper-class families that they worked for. In a 13th-century treatise, it states that a dairymaid should be "modest and honest, faithful and hard-working, knowledgeable and experienced in the tasks of the dairy".

OUTDATED LABOUR

By the 20th century, dairymaids making cheese and butter for families and selling the surplus declined as cheese-making moved from farms and homes and into factories. Thanks to industrialisation, the need for dairymaids soon disappeared due to the automation of the dairy industry.

Illustration by Kevin McGivern

Historical Treasures

TERRACOTTA STRAINER

An important tool in the ancient art of cheese-making
Lydia, 6th century BCE

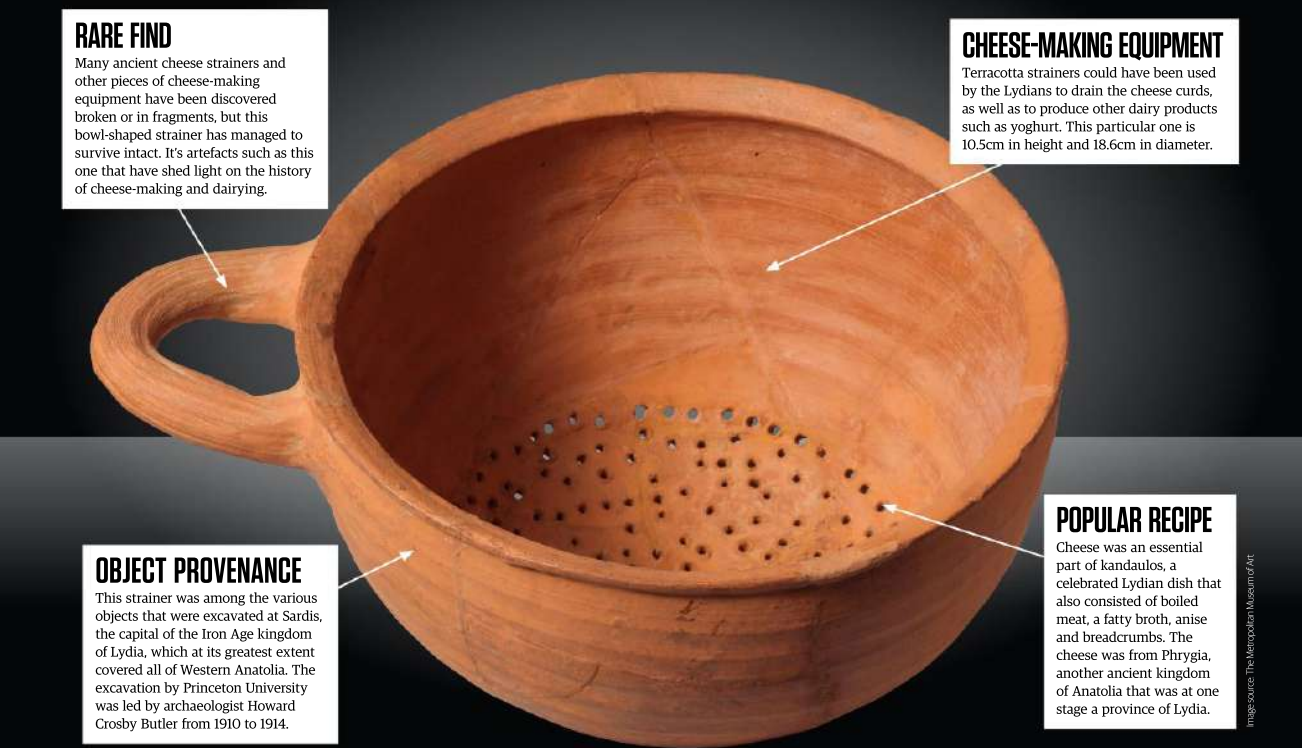
In the Neolithic period, cheese was a crucial part of the human diet, as milk was full of essential fats, proteins and minerals needed to survive. However, milk would quickly ferment in warm climates due to the lactic acid present, causing it to separate into curds and whey. The whey was then drained away using ceramic strainers, although we do not know when or why this first occurred. Nevertheless, this produced a fresh cheese that could either be eaten immediately or preserved with salt and stored for consumption later.

It also remains unknown exactly how humans realised that rennet could be used for controlled coagulation in cheese-making. It is thought that the enzyme was discovered accidentally when animals' stomachs were used to store and transport milk, with the residual rennet in the stomachs curdling the milk into cheese.

There were many advantages to producing cheese, which was an effective way to preserve excess milk and could be stockpiled for the scarce winter months. Cheese was a reliable food source in comparison to crops, which could be unpredictable, and it would be vital during times of famine. Like many of us today, Neolithic people were also lactose intolerant and the cheese-making process removed a lot of the lactose from the milk - the lactose would have simply dissolved in the whey that was strained away.

The earliest surviving evidence that we have for cheese-making dates back over several millennia. In Northern Europe, remnants of colander-like vessels from the 6th millennium BCE were discovered in the Kuyavia region, Poland. It was speculated that they would have been used as strainers for cheese-making, and when researchers analysed the pottery shards they found that milk fat residue had seeped into the clay. This suggests that the strainers had come into contact with cheese or possibly another dairy product, such as butter.

Thanks to the excavation of these shards we have an idea of when cheese-making - a key milestone for human civilisation - began. The process for cheese-making from the Neolithic and ancient periods is similar to our modern processes today, with strainers resembling the excavated ceramic ones still being used by cultures all over the world.



RARE FIND

Many ancient cheese strainers and other pieces of cheese-making equipment have been discovered broken or in fragments, but this bowl-shaped strainer has managed to survive intact. It's artefacts such as this one that have shed light on the history of cheese-making and dairying.

CHEESE-MAKING EQUIPMENT

Terracotta strainers could have been used by the Lydians to drain the cheese curds, as well as to produce other dairy products such as yoghurt. This particular one is 10.5cm in height and 18.6cm in diameter.

OBJECT PROVENANCE

This strainer was among the various objects that were excavated at Sardis, the capital of the Iron Age kingdom of Lydia, which at its greatest extent covered all of Western Anatolia. The excavation by Princeton University was led by archaeologist Howard Crosby Butler from 1910 to 1914.

POPULAR RECIPE

Cheese was an essential part of kandaulos, a celebrated Lydian dish that also consisted of boiled meat, a fatty broth, anise and breadcrumbs. The cheese was from Phrygia, another ancient kingdom of Anatolia that was at one stage a province of Lydia.

Image source: The Metropolitan Museum of Art

CHAMPIONS OF CHEESE

From dairymaids to manufacturing pioneers, meet ten figures who played an important role in the history of cheese

© Getty Images

Louis Pasteur
French, 1822-95

French scientist Louis Pasteur's research of the fermentation process led to his discovery that the growth of micro-organisms spoiled beverages. He developed the pasteurisation method, a heat-treatment process that kills the pathogenic bacteria and extends the shelf life of certain food and drink, including milk. The process is still crucial today and widely used in the dairy and food industries. It is extremely useful for cheesemaking, allowing producers to maintain both consistency and standardisation of their cheeses as well as automating their production. Pasteurisation also ensures the safety of cheese for consumers, although raw milk cheeses are still popular.

COLUMELLA
ROMAN, 4 CE – C.70 CE

Columella was a Roman agricultural writer known for writing *De Re Rustica*, a 12-volume work that serves as an important source on Roman agriculture. In section eight of book seven, Columella provides a detailed analysis of cheesemaking, discussing topics such as the importance of using high-quality milk and controlling temperature during coagulation. Notably, he is the first person to write about the process of cheesemaking from start to finish.

2x © Alamy

JAMES L KRAFT
CANADIAN-AMERICAN, 1874-1953

Born in Canada, Kraft emigrated to the United States in 1903, where he attended a business college. Moving to Chicago the following year, he purchased cheese in bulk from wholesalers and then sold it to local retailers in tinfoil and glass jars. Kraft was so successful that by 1914 he had opened his first cheese manufacturing plant with his brothers. He also developed a process for pasteurising cheese that he then sold in four-ounce tins, becoming the first person to gain a patent for processed cheese. By revolutionising the manufacturing and distribution of cheese, Kraft improved its shelf-life and helped trigger an increased consumption of cheese in the USA.

© Getty Images

The US armed forces bought over 2.7 million kilos of Kraft's canned cheese during World War I

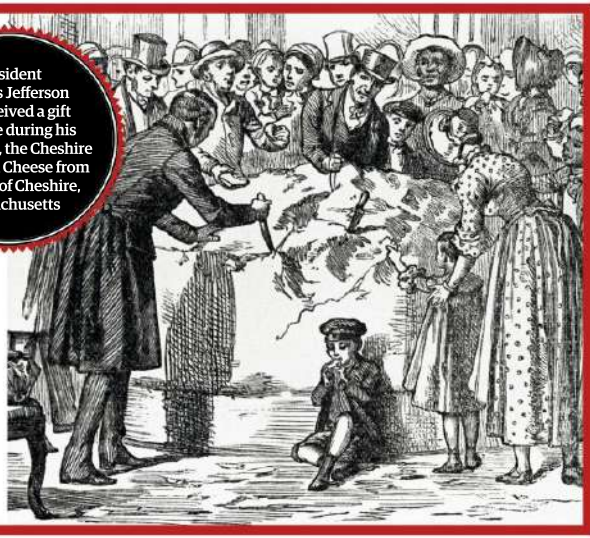
ARISTAEUS GREEK

According to Greek myth, Aristaeus is the son of the god Apollo and the nymph Cyrene. It is said that he was fed cheese by the nymphs, who then taught him how to curdle milk with rennet and produce cheese. He passed the knowledge of how to make cheese to humans and he became worshipped as the god of cheesemaking, as well as the god of beekeeping and olive growing.

President Andrew Jackson

American, 1767-1845

President Thomas Jefferson also received a gift of cheese during his presidency, the Cheshire Mammoth Cheese from the town of Cheshire, Massachusetts



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During his presidency, Jackson was sent a 635kg cheese as a gift from a New York dairy farmer. The president left it in the White House entrance hall for the next two years to age and in 1837, before leaving office, he invited members of the public to come and eat it. The cheese was eaten in just two hours, however it left a smell and stain that remained in the entrance hall for some time afterwards.

JESSE WILLIAMS

AMERICAN, 1798-1864

In 1851, cheesemaker and farmer Jesse Williams opened the first cheese factory in America. Located in Rome, New York, his pioneering factory produced over 45,000kg of cheese in its first year alone, five-times the amount that was made by farmsteads. As a result, Williams became known as 'the father of factory cheese' and within the next 15 years, 500 cheese factories had been opened in New York.

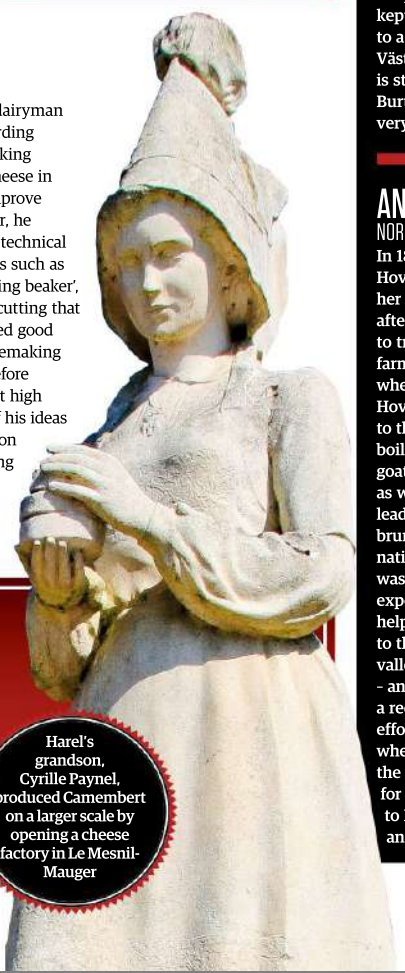
© Alamy

JOSEPH HARDING

ENGLISH, 1805-76

Image source: wiki/Dairy farming, being the theory, practice, and methods of dairying (1880)

Somerset dairyman Joseph Harding started making cheddar cheese in 1851. To improve his cheddar, he developed technical innovations such as the 'revolving beaker', a new piece of equipment for curd cutting that reduced manual labour. He promoted good dairy hygiene and shared his cheesemaking techniques, such as cooling milk before production and ageing the cheese at high temperatures. The dissemination of his ideas paved the way for the standardisation of cheddar cheese and led to Harding becoming known as the 'father of cheddar cheese.' Thanks in large part to his efforts, cheddar cheese became popular around the world.



Marie Harel

French, 1761-1844

According to legend, Harel was a dairymaid and cheesemaker who invented Camembert cheese. It is said that she hid a priest who was fleeing the French Revolution, and to show his gratitude he taught her how to make Brie, the cheese of his home region. Harel took this recipe and altered it, using local Normandy milk, smaller round moulds and omitting cream altogether, producing a new cheese that she named after her village.

Harel's grandson, Cyrille Paynel, produced Camembert on a larger scale by opening a cheese factory in Le Mesnil-Mauger

ULRIKA ELEONORA LINDSTRÖM

SWEDISH, C.1830s-1892

Lindström learnt how to make Västgötaost cheese after attending dairy school in Degeberga, and she used this knowledge when she joined the Old Town dairy in Burträsk in 1869 as a maid. According to legend, Lindström was supposed to be watching the curdling vat when she was distracted by her lover, causing her to keep reheating the curds. After it was left to age, the cheese was found to have a unique taste and so Västerbottensost cheese born, with Lindström's recipe becoming a well-kept secret only known to a few people. Today, Västerbottensost cheese is still only made in Burträsk and it remains very popular in Sweden.

ANNE HOV

NORWEGIAN, 1846 – C.1935

In 1863, dairymaid Anne Hov was inspired to create her own brown cheese after being given some to try by a neighbouring farm. Made with the whey from cows' milk, Hov decided to add cream to the whey as she was boiling it, later adding goats' milk to her recipe as well. Her technique lead to the creation of brunost cheese, Norway's national cheese, which was subsequently exported to Oslo. This helped bring prosperity to the Gudbrandsdalen valley – where she lived – and brought it out of a recession. In 1933, Hov's efforts were recognised when she was awarded the King's Medal of Merit for her contribution to Norwegian cuisine and economy.

Q&A with...

PROFESSOR PAUL KINDSTEDT

Tasting the historical significance of cheese and cheesemaking and its impact on Western civilisation

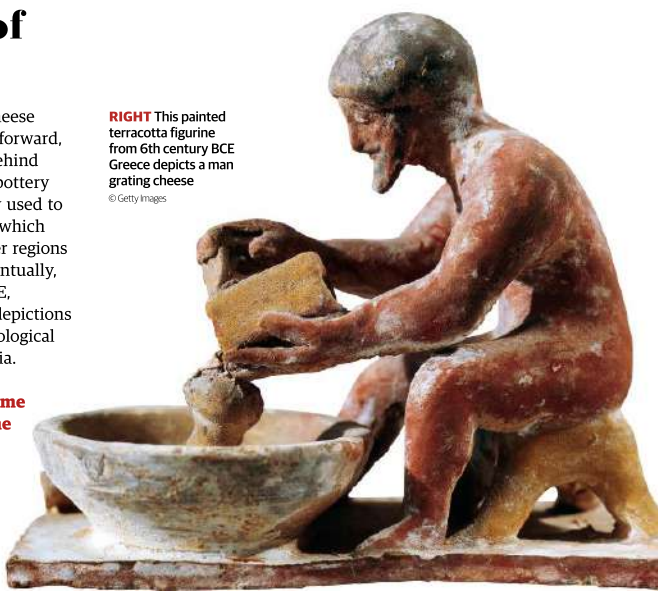
Why do you think cheese is important as a historical subject?
The history of cheese offers an intriguing lens through which to view the evolution of human communities in diverse environments over long stretches of time. Dairying arose around 10,000 years ago as a component of the Neolithic agricultural revolution that has shaped the human story. Cheesemaking quickly followed the onset of dairying as a means to transform milk into broadly digestible and preserved forms. Because dairying and cheesemaking afforded enormous survival advantage, these practices were revered and meticulously conserved by migrating nomadic pastoralists and sedentary mixed farmers over thousands of years and thousands of miles across large swaths of Asia, Africa and Europe. As migrating peoples settled in new regions with new environmental constraints, cheesemakers had to adapt their practices out of necessity, which ultimately gave rise to entirely new local cheese varieties. Over time, cheesemaking etched deep imprints into the social and cultural landscape of diverse human communities, still evident today.

What are the earliest historical and archaeological sources that we have about cheese and cheesemaking?
The earliest evidence is indirect and inferential. First came dairying in the late 9th millennium BCE, the evidence for which comes from skeletal and dental remains of the animals that were slaughtered by early Neolithic communities. From these remains, reconstructions of the size, sex and age distributions of domesticated livestock at the time of death are used to infer the primary purposes for which the livestock were raised. Archaeogenetic evidence further suggests that cheesemaking likely commenced soon after dairying, but direct evidence for cheesemaking does not emerge until the dawn of pottery-making in the 7th millennium BCE. Many early pottery fragments, recovered from Anatolia and dated to this period contain residues of milk fat, indicating that the pots contained concentrated milk products (cheese and/or butter). From that time forward, migrating cheesemakers left behind residue-laden fragments from pottery containers and sieves that they used to separate curds from the whey, which have been recovered from other regions of Asia, Europe and Africa. Eventually, by the late 4th millennium BCE, abundant written and artistic depictions of cheese appear in the archaeological record of southern Mesopotamia.

In your opinion, what are some of the pivotal moments in the history and development of cheesemaking?
Towards the end of the 7th millennium BCE, a pivotal rapid climate change event triggered mass migrations of Neolithic farmers/cheesemakers out of Anatolia, westward across Europe and eastward to the fringes of the Eurasian steppe. The fertile European landscape with its plethora of distinct microenvironments destined Europe to then become the global epicentre of diverse cheeses. The eastward migratory flow ultimately fuelled the rise of a new steppe culture of mobile horse-riding pastoralists that carried their reverence for dairying and cheese south to India, where they left an indelible imprint on Hindu culture. Other mobile horse-riding steppe pastoralists swept westwards into vast tracks of Europe and likely influenced European cheese history in ways yet to be discovered. Others settled to the east in Mongolia, where the

> "Cheese has long been viewed as mysterious, sacred and of spiritual significance"

Paul Kindstedt is a Professor of Food Science in the Department of Nutrition and Food Sciences at the University of Vermont, where he currently serves as the Co-Director of the Vermont Institute for Artisan Cheese. He is also the co-author of *American Farmstead Cheese* (2005) with the Vermont Cheese Council.



RIGHT This painted terracotta figurine from 6th century BCE Greece depicts a man grating cheese
© Getty Images

Headshot source: Paul Kindstedt

© Alamy

ABOVE *Still Life with Cheeses, Almonds and Pretzels* by 17th century Dutch artist Clara Peeters

great Mongol empire eventually arose that conquered vast regions stretching from Europe in the west to China in the east. Without the contribution of dairying and cheesemaking to the steppe subsistence strategy, such flourishing on the Eurasian steppe would likely never have come to pass.

What impact has the evolution of cheesemaking had on Western civilisation?

Evidence of the profound impact of cheesemaking on Western civilisation is abundantly present by the 4th millennium BCE in the archaeological record of southern Mesopotamia. Cheese was already an integral component of the centralised forms of religious expression practiced in the monumental temples that underpinned the division of labour, and political and social stratification of the Mesopotamian city-state. On a more practical level, cheese helped feed the large urban population of the city-state. In time, this remarkable city-state model of community organisation was copied and adapted by the Hittite civilisation of Anatolia, the Greeks and the Romans. All throughout, cheesemaking remained embedded in both religious and economic practices, ultimately shaping the post-Roman Christian West. The impact of cheesemaking reverberated through the medieval monastic era, the Reformation, down to the modern era and the post-modern 21st century in ways that extend directly back to antiquity.

How have our attitudes towards cheese been shaped over time?

Across space, time and culture, cheese has long been viewed as mysterious, sacred and of spiritual significance. Cheese has inspired aspirations that extend beyond simply survival of the species. Since at least the 4th millennium BCE, cheese has been linked to quality of life (food was bland and tedious throughout much of human history; cheese became a beloved source of culinary diversity), to food culture that binds communities together and forges collective identity, and to questions of meaning that transcend the day-to-day necessities of existence. This has not changed for at least six millennia and perhaps longer. What has changed, arguably beginning in 19th century and evolving through the 20th and now 21st century, is the unprecedented abundance and availability of cheese in the developed world. This has fostered a bifurcated public attitude toward cheese. On the one hand, cheese has become broadly valued for its low cost and convenience, made possible by mass production technology. However, this in turn has provoked a resurgence of appreciation for traditional artisanal cheesemaking, with its longstanding connections to food culture, quality of life and spiritual expression.

CHEESE AND CULTURE: A HISTORY OF CHEESE AND ITS PLACE IN WESTERN CIVILIZATION
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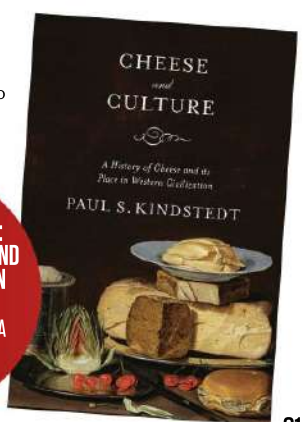
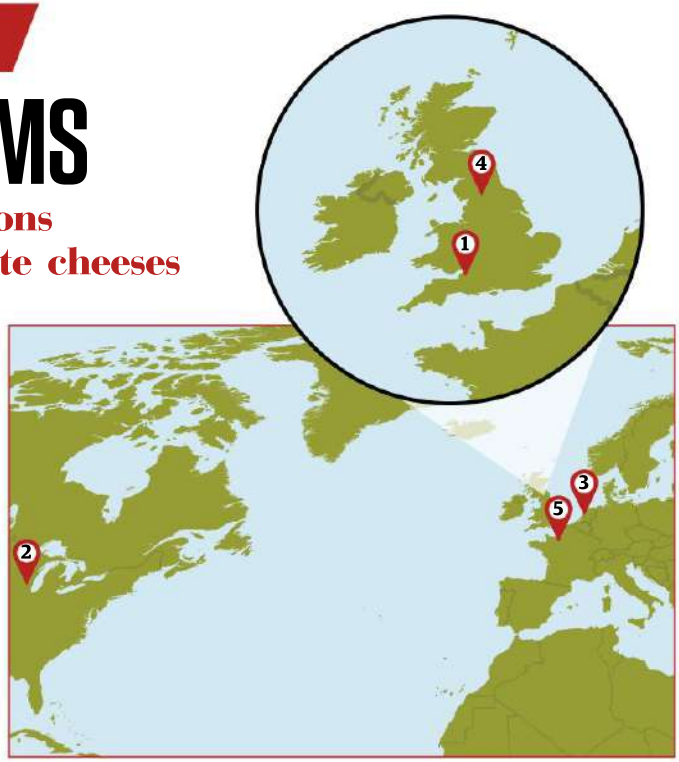


CHEESE MUSEUMS

Explore some of the locations associated with our favourite cheeses



1 CHEDDAR GORGE CHEESE COMPANY

CHEDDAR, SOMERSET, UK

The Cheddar Gorge Cheese Company is the only remaining producer of the iconic and perennially popular Cheddar cheese in the village of Cheddar, Somerset. It has been devoted to preserving the traditional and authentic art of cheesemaking since 2003, and is an essential destination for all fans of the world's favourite cheese.

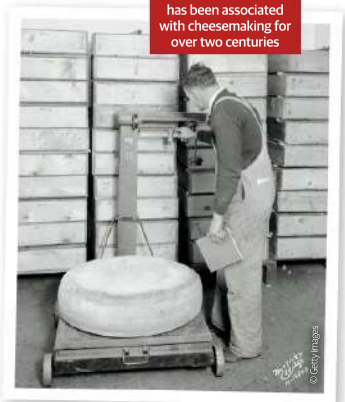
Visitors can enter a special viewing gallery in order to watch the cheese being made – a process that takes seven hours and uses fresh unpasteurised milk that is delivered from local dairies every morning. The completed cheese is placed either in special stores or taken to a nearby cave and left to mature. Although the milder version is left to mature for only six months before being ready to consume, the more mature variants are left for two years in order to develop their quintessential and all-important fuller flavour. After watching the cheese being made, visitors can enjoy the finished product at a mouth-watering tasting session in the factory shop.

The Cheddar Gorge Cheese Company visitor centre is open every day between 10.30am and 4.30pm and entry costs £2.50.

Visitors can gorge on authentic Cheddar cheese

2 NATIONAL HISTORIC CHEESEMAKING CENTER MUSEUM

MONROE, WISCONSIN, USA

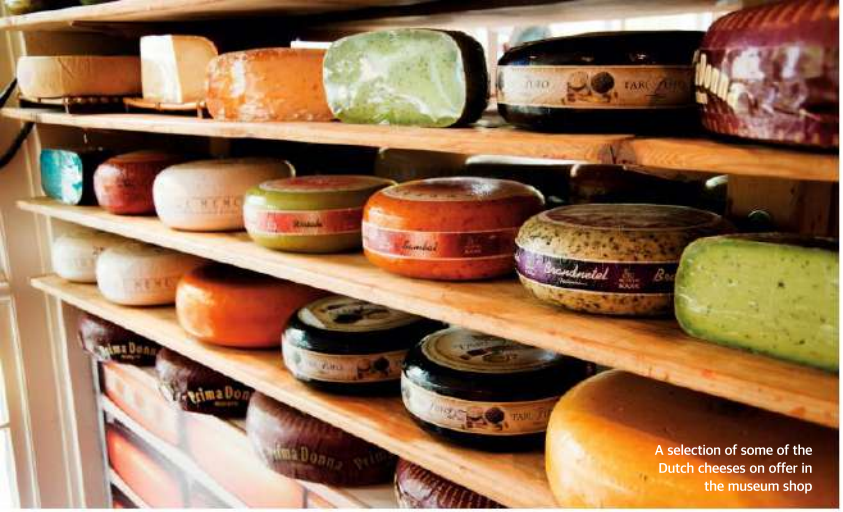


Monroe in Wisconsin has been associated with cheesemaking for over two centuries

Located in the heart of Wisconsin, which is known as the dairy state of America due to its long association with dairy farming, the National Historic Cheesemaking Center Museum is an excellent introduction to the development of the cheese industry not just in Wisconsin but also throughout the United States.

At the heart of the museum is the restored 19th century Imobersteg Farmstead Cheese Factory, which houses the authentic machinery used by German, Swiss and Dutch immigrants to make their native cheeses. Once a year, on the second Saturday in June, visitors are invited to watch a 41kg wheel of Swiss cheese being made using traditional methods. There are also numerous displays charting the history of cheesemaking and dairy farming in Wisconsin. Although there isn't a cheese shop on site, there are plenty of places to buy cheese locally, such as the famous Baumgartner's Cheese Store and Tavern, which was established in 1931 and is the oldest cheese store in Monroe.

The National Historic Cheesemaking Center Museum is open from 1 May to 31 October and costs $5 (£3.60) to enter.



A selection of some of the Dutch cheeses on offer in the museum shop

3 AMSTERDAM CHEESE MUSEUM
AMSTERDAM, NETHERLANDS

As might be expected for a cheese museum in Holland, which is home to some of the most iconic and delicious cheeses in the world, the small but perfectly formed Amsterdam Cheese Museum is an excellent introduction to the history of Dutch cheese.

The museum, located a mere stone's throw from Anne Frank House, was founded by two Dutch cheese enthusiasts, Henk and Edwin, who are devoted to introducing their visitors to the very best cheeses from their country. Not only can you enjoy free cheese tastings but you can also take the opportunity to dress up as a traditional Dutch cheesemaker.

The Amsterdam Cheese Museum's wealth of cheese-related exhibits includes such delights as the most expensive cheese slicer in the world. You can enjoy roaming around the museum's extensive cheese shop, which is stacked high with an amazing selection of Dutch cheeses such as vintage Gouda, all ready and waiting for you to enjoy at home. And if you aren't able to visit in person, they are happy to deliver their cheeses worldwide, which is even more reason to check them out.

The Amsterdam Cheese Museum is open every day between 9am and 7pm.

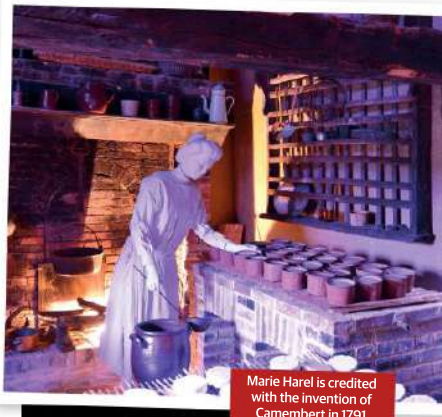
4 WENSLEYDALE CREAMERY
HAWES, NORTH YORKSHIRE, UK

As it's one of the most popular and quintessentially British cheeses, it's not surprising there's a museum devoted to the delicious icon that is Wensleydale cheese. Located in the heart of the Yorkshire Dales National Park, the centre of Wensleydale country, the Wensleydale Creamery has been the proud custodian of many centuries of cheesemaking in the area since 1992. It boasts a popular visitors' centre devoted to cheese, as well as a shop selling its award-winning Wensleydale cheese. This is made using traditional methods that have been used since the first local cheeses were made by Cistercian monks in the mid-12th century.

At the Yorkshire Wensleydale Cheese Experience, visitors can enjoy an interactive journey through the history of cheesemaking in the area, which includes a variety of fun, hands-on activities as well as an opportunity to watch Wensleydale cheese being made by the museum's master cheesemakers. There is also an innovative open-plan demonstration room, where visitors can watch cheese being made, butter being churned and even learn some new recipes from the regular cooking demonstrations, which involve the making of various local cheesy treats.

The shop at the Wensleydale Creamery boasts a cracking selection of local cheeses.

The Wensleydale Creamery is open every day between 9am and 4pm.



Marie Harel is credited with the invention of Camembert in 1791

5 LA MAISON DU CAMEMBERT
CAMEMBERT, FRANCE

Due to its position as one of the best-loved and most well-known French cheeses, it seems only right that there should be a museum devoted entirely to the Camembert cheese. It has been made in Normandy since the recipe was first developed by a farmer called Marie Harel in 1791 and received the royal seal of approval when it was later presented to Napoleon III. La Maison du Camembert pays tribute to Harel, who is unsurprisingly considered to be a local heroine.

Visitors can explore the fascinating story of this most iconic French cheese through a series of displays, after which they can taste and buy authentic local Camembert and cider in the well-stocked shop.

The Maison du Camembert is open every day, 10am to 4.30pm. Entry is 4 euros (£3.45).

The Camembert museum is the only place devoted to France's best-loved cheese.

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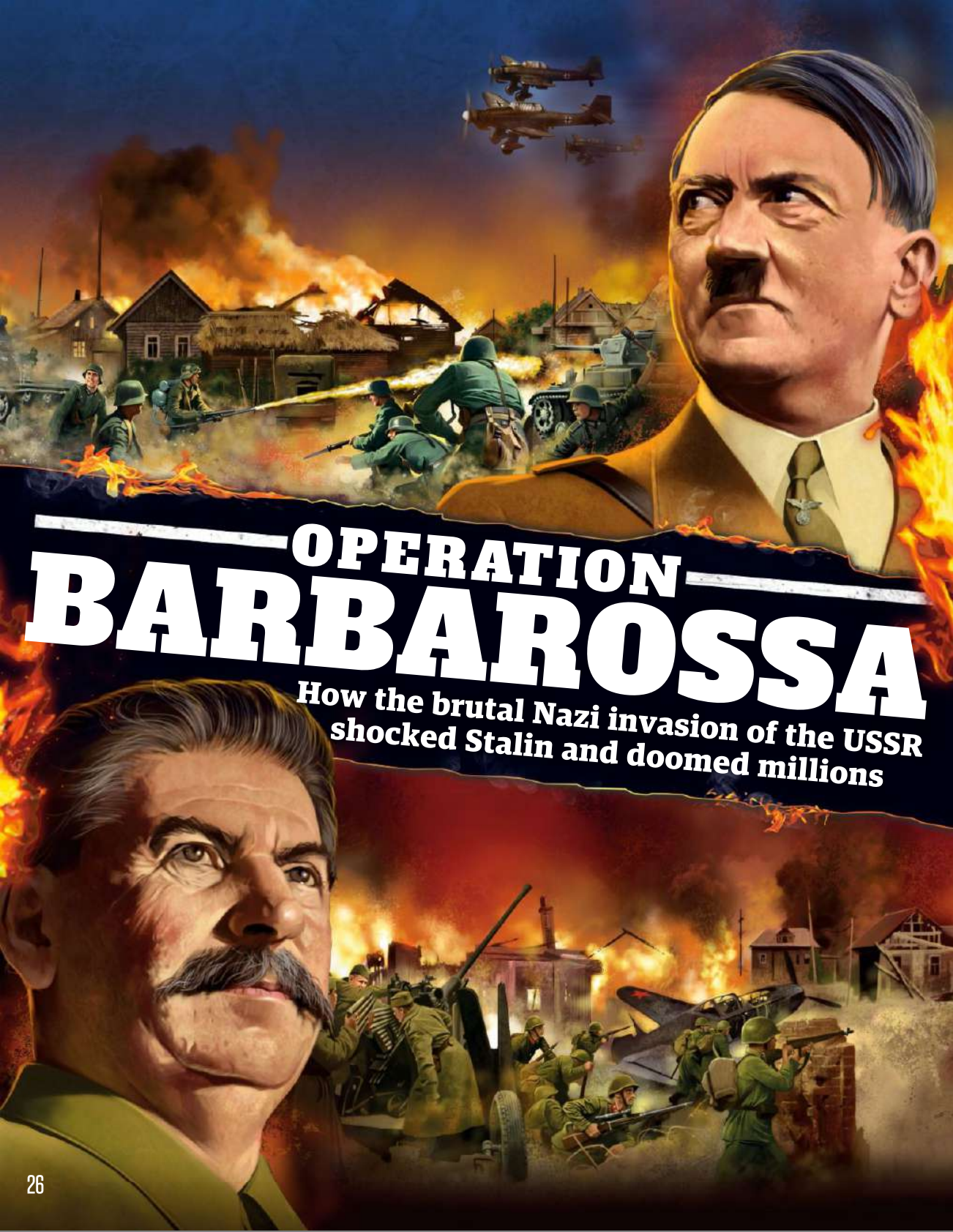

OPERATION BARBAROSSA

How the brutal Nazi invasion of the USSR shocked Stalin and doomed millions

THE INVASION

On 22 June 1941 Adolf Hitler's forces invaded the Soviet Union. Jonathan Trigg examines the surprise Nazi attack on the USSR

EXPERT BIO

JONATHAN TRIGG

Jonathan Trigg is a military historian specialising in the Eastern Front during World War II. His books include the *Through German Eyes* series, with the latest being *Barbarossa Through German Eyes*.

Image courtesy of Madeleine Trigg

In 1939 Hitler's Germany had signed a non-aggression pact with the Soviet Union, yet on 22 June 1941 Nazi troops entered the USSR and one of the bloodiest campaigns of World War II began. The initial operation, codenamed Barbarossa, saw the German troops make rapid advances, but the tide began to turn against them in the winter months. Over the following years, the Red Army gradually forced the Nazis out of the USSR, and the fighting on the Eastern Front became a turning point in the war. Historian Jonathan Trigg explains why Adolf Hitler broke the pact with the Soviets and how the Nazis were so successful in their initial attack.

What was the situation in 1941? How was the war going for Nazi Germany?

In a word, splendidly. The Nazis were at the absolute zenith of their power. In a very short period of time they had defeated France and conquered nearly the whole of Europe, apart from Britain. Both Greece and Yugoslavia joined the Axis allies in the Balkans, so essentially by 1941 all the countries on the Continent were controlled by the Germans, were allied to them, or neutral. The only thing they couldn't do was make the leap across that short little bit of water, the English Channel. The Nazis were even down in North Africa: Erwin Rommel had a small force and had thrown back the British troops, advancing into Tobruk, Libya. Hitler was really at the top of the tree – Germany was not at war with the United States and not yet at war with the Soviet Union. Only Great Britain stood against them, and even then it seemed as if it was only a matter of time before the British capitulated and Germany won.

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RIGHT A briefing of a Luftwaffe unit. The Luftwaffe was key to the German success in the initial stages of the battle

BELOW Soviet prisoners of war at a camp in Potschuz, USSR

Illustrations by Joe Cummings

What was the background and lead up to Barbarossa? Why did Hitler attack Russia at this time?

The popular opinion in Germany, even among the civilian population, was: 'Let's concentrate on destroying Britain.' At the time the Nazi-Soviet Non-aggression Pact was in place and both countries had taken part in the dismemberment of Poland in 1939. The German public and military didn't feel there was a need to strike Russia, but the one person who did was Hitler. To him the enemy was Soviet communism; in his mind Soviet communism was bound up with the Jews and to attack one was to attack both. He'd always been clear that sooner or later Germany was going to have a showdown with the Soviet Union and take the land, mineral and food resources that Germany didn't have. Hitler started to move his troops but the crazy thing was that no one thought it was going to happen. Millions of men, with all their equipment, were moving to the Russian border but everyone was saying: 'It can't be an attack on the Soviet Union, that will be mad.' They all assumed the Soviets would allow the army through their territory, down into the Middle East. Once there, a big German claw would then destroy the British Middle East Army, and cut the Suez Canal and the links to British India. That would be the end of the war because Britain would have to sue for peace, but of course that wasn't the plan at all.

What was the initial offensive?

The German front was absolutely huge, almost 1,600km from north to south. They split it into three army groups: Army Group North, Army Group Centre and Army Group South. The vast bulk of the Soviet armed forces were in the ▶

western Soviet Union. The Germans were going to smash through the border defences as quickly as possible and, using a whole series of encirclements, trap the enemy in big pockets to annihilate the bulk of the Red Army before it could withdraw. Once that had been achieved, they would advance down through Moscow down to Astrakhan on the Caspian Sea, and then the war would be over. On 22 June, very early in the morning, the border was hit and the Soviets were caught completely by surprise. Despite all the intelligence and information to the contrary, Stalin never believed the Germans were going to attack and was caught with his trousers down, so to speak. The Germans, in a very rapid series of advances, swept forward and went through the Baltic states in double-quick time and got to the borders of Russia. In the centre, where the main punch of the German offensive was, they carried out a whole series of engagements. The biggest and most important was the Battle of Bialystok-Minsk, which basically destroyed the entire central force of the Red Army. The south is where the Soviets had their greatest forces so the Germans had a hard time going through Moldova and into the borders of Ukraine; it was only later that they started to gain traction. It was an absolute shock, that cannot be overstated – the Soviets just couldn't believe that they were under attack.

Who were some of the key commanders on both sides?
The army group commanders were key, they were the guys on the ground who controlled the mass of Nazi Germany's armed forces. In the north it was a staunch Catholic Bavarian called Wilhelm Ritter von Leeb; in the centre was Fedor von Bock; and down in the south was the old Prussian war horse himself, Gerd von Rundstedt. All three had seen action in World War I and were very experienced. On the Soviet side there was the Soviet Chief of General Staff, Georgy Zhukov, who had famously beaten the Japanese in 1939 and effectively pushed them to look to the south, sparking the events that led up to Pearl Harbor. He was an incredibly competent general and quite brutal in his outlook. A key subordinate he had, looking after the central forces, was Dmitry Pavlov. He was a young guy, only 43, but was well thought of and was in charge of large parts

ABOVE A 1941 Soviet propaganda poster proclaiming 'Defend Moscow'

© Getty Images

LEFT Soviet tanks preparing for battle on the first day of Operation Barbarossa

of the Red Army. Pavlov himself, unfortunately, believed Moscow's utterances that there was no chance of war against Nazi Germany, and the night before the attack he went to watch a comedy show. When the Germans attacked his forces were crushed. Moscow was screaming at him to counter attack but there was just no way of doing it. Pavlov and his staff were infamously ordered back to Moscow, where they were sentenced and executed. Pavlov's body was thrown in a landfill.

How key was the Luftwaffe to the Germans' initial success in Operation Barbarossa?
It was fundamental to German success. The Luftwaffe was designed as a tactical air force entirely dedicated to supporting the army. It didn't operate in its own strategic sense like RAF Bomber Command did for much of its life. The Luftwaffe's goal was to achieve aerial supremacy and, if possible, wipe out the enemy air force on the ground. This would leave the skies open for the dive bombers, who would act as aerial artillery that could range ahead with the Panzers. Whenever the Panzers met any resistance, the Luftwaffe could smash it to pieces and allow the advance to continue at speed. The concept had been tried in Poland and hadn't worked very well: the Luftwaffe defeated the Polish Air Force but not on the ground. It worked better against the Dutch and Belgian air forces. Because the Soviet Air Force wasn't expecting an attack, its planes were literally

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parked in lovely neat rows at airfields. The slaughter on the ground was horrific. The Germans themselves didn't even believe the claims of their own pilots (they were notorious for exaggerating) but when they checked the numbers of wrecked enemy aircraft they found they were actually higher than they thought. Any Soviet planes that got into the air were outmatched, outgunned and outnumbered – over 2,000 Soviet aircraft were destroyed. That left the skies open for the Germans to bomb their way forward – wherever the planes went, the troops went.

What happened during the Battle of Kiev?

At the time, Kiev was one of the largest cities in the Soviet Union. It was the capital of Ukraine, a key position on the Dnieper River, and the fulcrum of the entire Soviet Southern Front. Stalin was determined to keep hold of it and gave a 'no withdrawal' order. He just pushed more and more of his armed forces into the city, and that gave the Germans an opportunity. If you look at a map of where Kiev sits, with the Dnieper curling round it, there's a bulge and that naturally lent itself to an encirclement. The Germans hoped this would lead to a knockout blow. They stopped their advance in the centre, towards Moscow, and switched the majority of the Panzer forces and sent them south to link up, well over 160km to the east of Kiev, with other Panzer forces. They could then destroy the Red Army troops and deliver a knockout blow. The Soviets didn't clock on to what was happening because the scale was so vast – it was about the same landmass as Slovenia. It was a horrific battle because the Soviets fought tooth and nail and the casualties on both sides were shocking. When the Soviets were trapped inside they couldn't get reinforcements, they couldn't get ammunition, food or water, and eventually they had to capitulate. The Germans captured 665,000 men. It was an incredible achievement but it didn't lead to victory, and that was the ridiculousness of the situation.

ABOVE German forces continue their advance into Russia, pushing through a burning village

RIGHT Fedor von Bock, who controlled the central German Army Group

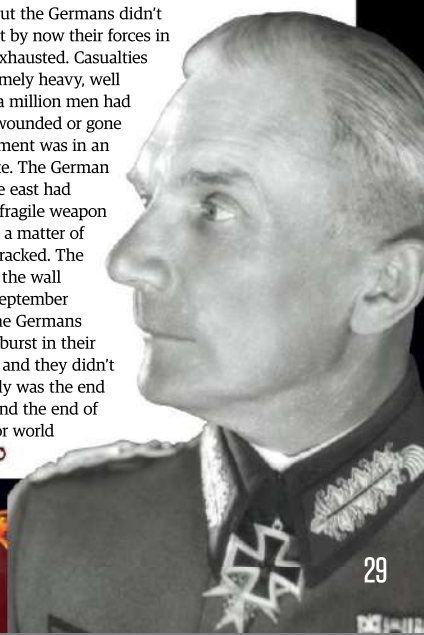
BARBAROSSA THROUGH GERMAN EYES by Jonathan Trigg is available from 15 June from Amberley Publishing

Why did Hitler view the capture of the Ukraine as important, going so far as to halt the German advance on Moscow?

Hitler always had an economic view rather than a strictly military one. The attack on the Soviet Union was undertaken for material resources, and you don't get more material resources than in Ukraine. The blacker soils of Ukraine are famous for their fertility. Hitler knew that starting the war would mean he would be cut off from foreign imports. He had to find a supply of food and that was where Ukraine came in. For him, that was hugely important. Strangely, he didn't view the capture of Moscow as being a prime military objective, even though it was the centre of the government, a huge transport hub and huge industrial hub, and its capture would signify the end of Soviet communism. But Hitler did not see it in that way – as far as he was concerned he saw Leningrad as the cradle of Bolshevism, where communism started. It was a fundamental error to not cut off the head of the Soviet state, which would have been to take Moscow.

What was the situation at the end of September?

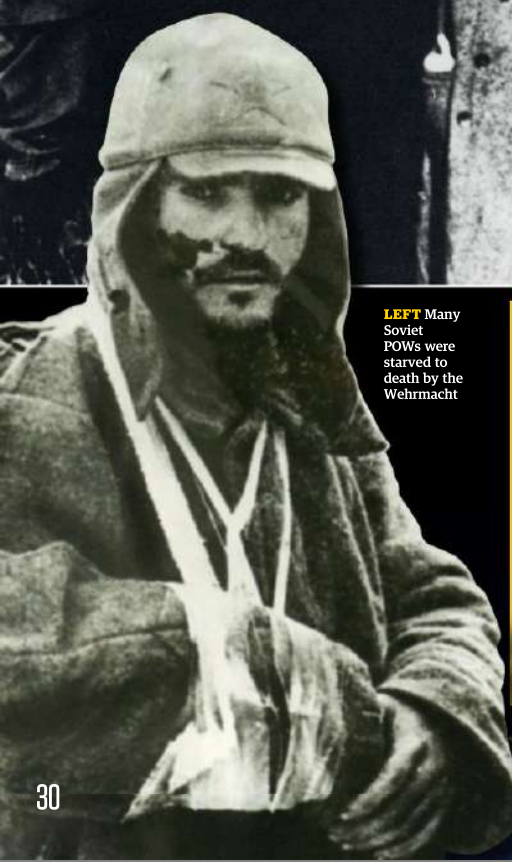
The Germans were within spitting distance of Leningrad but were running out of steam. Up in the north they were getting close to their final objective and down in the south they had achieved that astounding victory at Kiev. In the centre a huge amount of fighting power was concentrated in Fedor von Bock's hands and a new operation, Operation Typhoon, was declared. This would be the attack that would take Moscow, but the Germans didn't understand that by now their forces in the east were exhausted. Casualties had been extremely heavy, well over a third of a million men had been killed or wounded or gone missing. Equipment was in an even worse state. The German operation in the east had become a very fragile weapon and it was only a matter of time before it cracked. The writing was on the wall by the end of September 1941 because the Germans needed a huge burst in their reinforcements and they didn't get it. That really was the end of Barbarossa and the end of Hitler's quest for world domination.



SLAUGHTER ON THE EASTERN FRONT

Operation Barbarossa was the start of the most savage theatre in World War II. Dr Alex Kay looks at the Nazis' horrific policies as they invaded the USSR

German soldiers taking Russian prisoners during Operation Barbarossa



LEFT Many Soviet POWs were starved to death by the Wehrmacht

EXPERT BIO

Image courtesy of Alex Kay

DR ALEX KAY

Alex Kay is Senior Lecturer in History at the University of Potsdam and lifetime Fellow of the Royal Historical Society. He has published five acclaimed books on Nazi Germany, including *The Making of an SS Killer* (2016). His latest book, *Empire of Destruction: A History of Nazi Mass Killing*, is due out in the UK on 28 September.

When German forces invaded the Soviet Union in 1941, the brutal nature of the ensuing conflict was unlike anything seen before. While more combatants were killed than in any other theatre, it's the horrific violence against cultural and racial groups for which the front was infamous. "Operation Barbarossa was the first campaign during World War II in which the systematic mass murder of Jews and other racial groups was instigated, and this starts from the very first day of the campaign," says Dr Alex Kay, senior lecturer and the chair of Military History/History of Violence at Potsdam University, Germany.

While atrocities had been committed on other fronts, the premeditated, planned mass murder of specific racial and cultural groups was hitherto unseen before this stage of the war. What was it that made the USSR different in the eyes of the Nazi elite? "Soviet Russia was really associated in Hitler's mind with the worst form of Jewish rule," says Kay. "From his point of view, it was the only country that was completely controlled by Jews." In *Mein Kampf*, written in 1924, Hitler had stated as much when he said: "In Russian Bolshevism we must see the attempt undertaken by the Jews in the 20th century to achieve world domination." As a result, Operation Barbarossa was seen by Hitler not only as a chance to obtain the land and resources he so desperately needed, but as a battle he had been anticipating for over a decade. "The murders began on the very first day of Operation Barbarossa and that gives an indication of how the campaign had been planned," Kay explains. "By the end of July, 63,000 people had been murdered by the Einsatzgruppen [mobile killing units of the SS] alone, and more than 90% of those victims were Jews."

One particularly shocking mandate, the Commissar Order, was issued two weeks before the invasion began. The Commissars were officials of the Communist Party within the Red Army, whose role it was to prevent desertion and promote party propaganda within the military. The Nazi order dictated that: "The originators of barbaric, Asiatic methods of warfare are the political commissars... Therefore, when captured either in battle or offering resistance, they are to be shot on principle." In a blatant breach of international law the resulting slaughter was horrific. "Perhaps as many as 10,000 Soviet political officers were murdered between June 1941 and May 1942, when the order was rescinded," says Kay. "This is the premeditated and systematic murder of regular uniformed prisoners of war."

These two groups were not the only ones targeted, however. "The Asian prisoners, or those who had such

ABOVE Many were executed due to either real or suspected links to partisan groups

an appearance in the eyes of their German captors, were repeatedly separated out from other POWs and shot," Kay tells us. "In addition to that, the SS, police and Wehrmacht units began killing Soviet psychiatric patients from August 1941, and nomadic Roma were also being targeted." In the POW camps, those captured by the Wehrmacht were often treated appallingly and, as food shortages became more acute, were often left unfed. "Soviet prisoners of war were targeted as direct competitors of the Wehrmacht for scarce food and starved to death," says Kay. "In occupied Poland, in camps like Stalag 342 in Belarus, you have examples of prisoners, tormented by hunger, requesting the Wehrmacht guard in writing to end their suffering by shooting them."

In July of 1941, however, the German advance began to face difficulties. "You had leading figures in the military concerned about high enemy resistance, high casualties and especially the security of the rear areas," Kay explains. "On 10 July, less than three weeks into the campaign, Army Group Centre was actually forced to go on the defensive." The weak security forces in the rear areas meant that supply lines were potentially vulnerable to Soviet resistance. "It's in this context that the Nazi regime decided to radicalise occupation security policies and escalate the violence," says Kay. "During the second half of July 6,000 additional policemen and 11,000 additional SS were deployed, alongside the original 3,000, resulting in a total of almost 20,000 troops, just for these tasks. By the end of July 1941 they were starting to kill women and children, and then entire communities."

Even for those not targeted as part of these mass murder operations, life during Operation Barbarossa was still extremely treacherous. In particular, lack of food was a very real threat faced by those living in occupied zones, with many dying of starvation. "A conservative estimate of hunger-induced mortality in the zone of operations of Army Group Centre alone amounts to 200,000 deaths from either outright starvation or related diseases," Kay reveals. Within many of the major cities, residents were targeted by the 'starvation policy'. "This effectively stole foodstuffs from occupied Soviet territories to feed the Wehrmacht and also to send back to the home front," says Kay. This was not the only threat facing non-combatants: Kay states that during 1942 alone around 1.4 million Soviet civilians were sent to Germany for forced labour. "In short, it's fair to say that normal life was no longer possible," Kay continues. "For anybody living in the Soviet territories practically every family experienced either death, hunger, forced labour, requisitioning or violence in one form or another."

By the end of the conflict on the Eastern Front, the estimated number of Soviet dead is shocking. "The most recent figures come to 26.6 million people," says Kay. "Red Army dead account for about 14.6 million, but this still leaves 12 million Soviet civilian deaths. If we add the three-plus million Soviet troops who perished as POWs, deduct those from the total of Red Army dead and add them to the civilian, it becomes clear that the majority of Soviet war dead comprise civilians and unarmed captured soldiers." The violence unleashed during Operation Barbarossa would have a lasting impact on the final years of the war. "Even in the context of WWII this violence was unprecedented," Kay concludes. "It provided a precedent. It meant that such tactics and such a level of violence was no longer unthinkable."

Partisans on the Eastern Front

For many civilians on the Eastern Front, partisan groups offered a way to escape their oppressors – and fight back

In the rear areas of the German advance, in those places under German occupation, a large number of partisan groups began fighting back against the Nazis. These groups were controlled directly from Moscow, with the tactical and operational aspects dictated by Lev Mekhlis, head of the Main Administration of Political Propaganda of the Army and NKVD. The groups were occasionally bolstered by Red Army soldiers who had escaped the slaughter, providing the partisans with knowledge and training. One particular unit that excelled itself in the early days of the movement was that led by Mihay Filipovich Shmyrev. On one occasion his unit ambushed a group of German soldiers bathing in a river, killing 25 to 30 of them. As a result of the partisan groups' attacks, the Nazi forces conducted merciless anti-partisan campaigns, resulting in yet more slaughter.

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INSIDE THE MIND OF HITLER

For the German leader, the fight against the Soviet Union was a key battle in his plan for global conquest

Shortly after completing the Nazi-Soviet Non-aggression Pact on 23 August 1939, Adolf Hitler said: "My pact was only meant to stall for time... to Russia will happen just what I have practised in Poland – we will crush the Soviet Union." Operation Barbarossa was a conflict entrenched in his perception of the Bolsheviks as a wholly Jewish enemy. "Hitler's planning on the whole was ideologically driven, rather than based on sound military goals," says military historian Anthony Tucker-Jones. Yet Hitler's obsession with masterminding Operation Barbarossa would prove instrumental in its failure.

Hitler gave various reasons for launching the invasion. "His main argument for conquest was Germany needing 'Lebensraum', or living space," Tucker-Jones explains. "He claimed that Germany was overcrowded and starved of resources, and therefore needed to expand. The irony is that Germany was far from overcrowded and actually imported an awful lot of slave labour from the occupied territories into Germany." Yet this was not the only reason the Führer gave his military commanders. "He claimed rather fancily to his generals that by attacking the Soviet Union it was a way of depriving Britain of a potential ally," says Tucker-Jones, the irony being that it was Barbarossa that would eventually lead the Soviet Union to join the Allies.

As both the battle on the Eastern Front, and the war in general, progressed, the German leader meddled incessantly with the planning. "Hitler micromanaged it more than ever," says Tucker-Jones. "Stalin, on the other hand, tried at the beginning, made a terrible mess of it, and then relied on his generals much more. Hitler never really did. His early victories convinced him that he knew best, and with the planning of Barbarossa he meddled endlessly."

Perhaps Hitler's greatest mistake came when he ordered Fedor von Bock's Army Group Centre to divert towards Ukraine instead of marching on Moscow. Many historians believe that if the Germans had instead concentrated on taking Moscow, Russia could've been defeated. "They couldn't work out whether they should take Moscow," says Tucker-Jones, "or if they were more interested in capturing the Donets Basin in Ukraine. Ultimately, Moscow was key." According to Hitler's friend Leni Riefenstahl, he blamed the loss on the Eastern Front on the failures of the Italian Army in Greece. "If the Italians had not attacked Greece and needed our help, the war would have taken a different course," Hitler supposedly said. "We could've anticipated the Russian cold by weeks and conquered Leningrad and Moscow."

Tucker-Jones concludes: "If you look at Hitler's campaigns preceding Barbarossa, those victories are quite remarkable. I think Hitler was intoxicated with his own success. He convinced himself, courtesy of Blitzkrieg, that he could achieve a swift victory and, if he hit Soviet Union hard enough, it would collapse."

22 June
OPERATION BARBAROSSA BEGINS

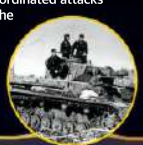
Over three million German soldiers, 150 divisions and 3,000 tanks enter the Soviet Union as the Nazi invasion begins. The forces are separated into three army groups: Army Group South, Army Group Centre and Army Group North.

22 – 30 June
BATTLE OF BREST FORTRESS

In Belarus, the invading Germans score one of their first victories of the campaign against fierce opposition. Expecting to take the fortress in a day, the defending Red Army troops hold out for an entire week. Small groups of soldiers scattered throughout the tunnels and bunkers cause heavy German casualties.

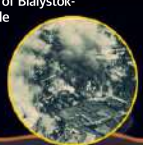
23 – 30 June
THE BATTLE OF BRODY

Six mechanised Soviet corps launch a counter-offensive between Dubno, Lutsk and Brody. Uncoordinated attacks by the Red Army and the skill of the Luftwaffe results in slaughter on both sides. The Battle of Brody is one of the largest tank battles ever fought.



22 June – 9 July
BATTLE OF BIALYSTOK-MINSK

A key German success, the goal of the Battle of Bialystok-Minsk is to encircle the Red Army forces around Minsk. All counter-attacks launched by Soviet troops fail.



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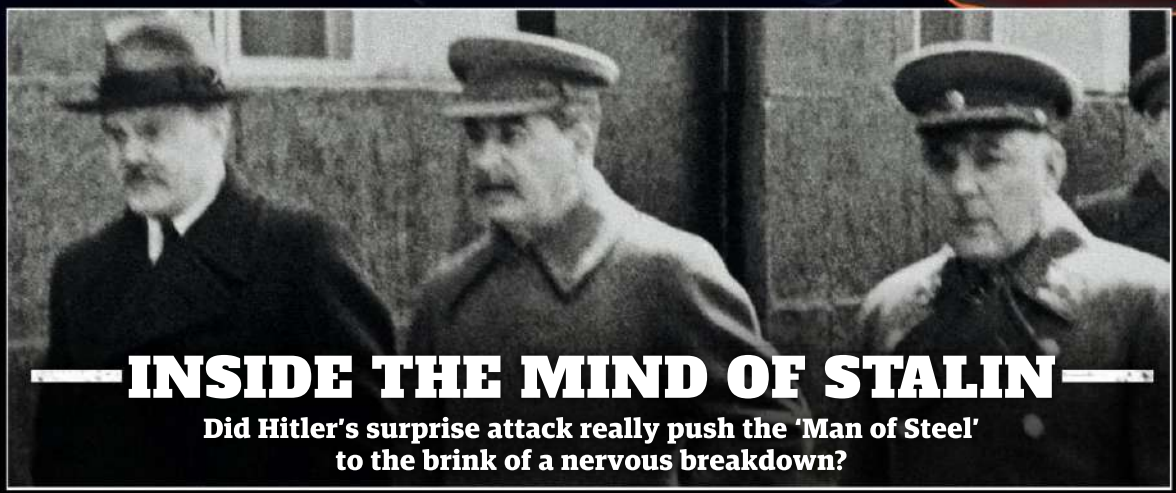


INSIDE THE MIND OF STALIN

Did Hitler's surprise attack really push the 'Man of Steel' to the brink of a nervous breakdown?

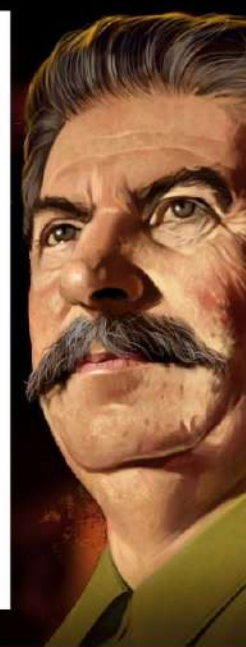
It seems clear that while Joseph Stalin, the General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, had been preparing for and expecting the non-aggression pact he had signed with Hitler to collapse, he had not expected it to happen at 3am on 22 June 1941. There had been warnings from his commanders and intelligence from spies within Germany, but Stalin wouldn't believe it. He was so convinced that it couldn't be happening that when Operation Barbarossa began he thought it must be the actions of rogue German commanders and waited for an official declaration from the Nazi government, which came four hours after the attack had already started.

"I think Stalin had no doubt that in the long term this pact was not viable," says Professor David Reynolds of the University of Cambridge. "He was playing for time but I think he persuaded himself that any breach to the pact would come as the result of a clear period of deteriorating relations. In other words, it wouldn't come out of the blue." It was because of this expectation that Stalin had not responded to increased troop activity on his borders, fearing any response from the Red Army could be used as pretext by the Germans.

"What Stalin was not prepared for was simply an attack without warning," says Reynolds. "He did not want (in this rather grey situation) to give Hitler any excuse for attacking. He didn't want to do anything in the way of mobilisation or even serious air reconnaissance over German-occupied territory. That would give Hitler an excuse to say, 'Stalin's about to attack. It's a provocation and we will act'."

It's been suggested by historians through the years that Stalin had a nervous breakdown as a result of this shock attack, but how true is this? "This question of a nervous breakdown remains a matter of debate," insists Reynolds. "I think that it was a claim made particularly strongly by Nikita Khrushchev in a speech from 1956, and that was part of a general denigration of Stalin that was happening during the Khrushchev era. It has been debated but there are other sources that suggest that when the magnitude of the offensive and the mess the country was in became clear, Stalin retreated to his dacha at the end of June." Senior Politburo members had to travel to meet Stalin and plead with him to return to Moscow, but this may have been part of his plan to test the loyalty of those around him.

"Some people said that maybe he was playing games to see if there was any serious opposition to him or not," Reynolds explains, perhaps mimicking a similar ploy used by Tsar Ivan IV (better known as Ivan the Terrible) when he abdicated in 1564. "This is a murky area but what is certainly clear is that Stalin was fundamentally taken aback by what had happened and his obvious culpability. It took him a while to regroup. Whether it was a nervous breakdown or whether it was something a little less startling than that is unclear. However, he doesn't speak to the Soviet people until 3 July."



10 July – 10 Sept

BATTLE OF SMOLENSK

The violent and bloody battle for the city of Smolensk lasts some two months. Intended as another German encirclement operation, the operation is prolonged due to a successful Soviet counterattack at Yelnya, south-east of Smolensk.

21 August

HITLER ORDERS ATTACK ON CRIMEA AND DONETS BASIN

In a move that many historians say has a significant bearing on the Germans' eventual defeat in the east, Hitler orders his forces to temporarily abandon the thrust towards Moscow and march on Ukraine. This is primarily so he can seize the area's resources.

16 September

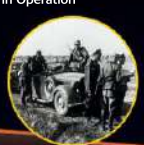
1ST AND 2ND PANZER GROUPS LINK UP TO WIN THE BATTLE OF KIEV

The Germans encircle Red Army soldiers in the area surrounding Kiev. The Russians resist for far longer than expected and around 750,000 Soviet troops are killed or captured.

2 October

OPERATION TYPHOON

After delays and focussing his forces on capturing Ukraine, Hitler orders the attack on Moscow in Operation Typhoon. This begins well in ideal weather conditions, but soon the Russian winter sets in and the Nazis are unprepared for the extreme cold.



NAZI WAR MACHINE

Inside the Panzer II that stormed the Eastern Front

With the end of World War I came the Treaty of Versailles. Among many things limiting Germany were restrictions to its military rights, preventing it from producing armoured vehicles except for a few designated for security. To get around this, the German military ordered the Panzer II be produced under the designation Landwirtschaftlicher Schlepper 100, meaning that it was developed under the guise of being a farm tractor. This was common practice for Germany, and ensured that it wasn't in short supply of armour when war broke out.

7.92mm coaxial Maschinengewehr

Also known by the designation MG 34, the 7.92 machine gun fitted to the Panzer II was an effective anti-infantry weapon and also saw service as a support weapon among Wehrmacht platoons.

20mm main gun

Produced in Germany in the mid-to-late Thirties, the 2cm KwK 30 L/55 was based on a 20mm flak cannon and was fully automatic, requiring the operator to fire in controlled bursts.

The frontal glacis

These only sported the standard amount of armour, which was unusual for a tank, but later received a new single-piece 30mm glacis upon reaching its final Ausf F designation.

Manual transmission system

The Panzer II sported a six-speed plus reverse manual gearbox made by ZF Friedrichshafen, which was generally considered to be reliable. Reversing was particularly handy for these little tanks.

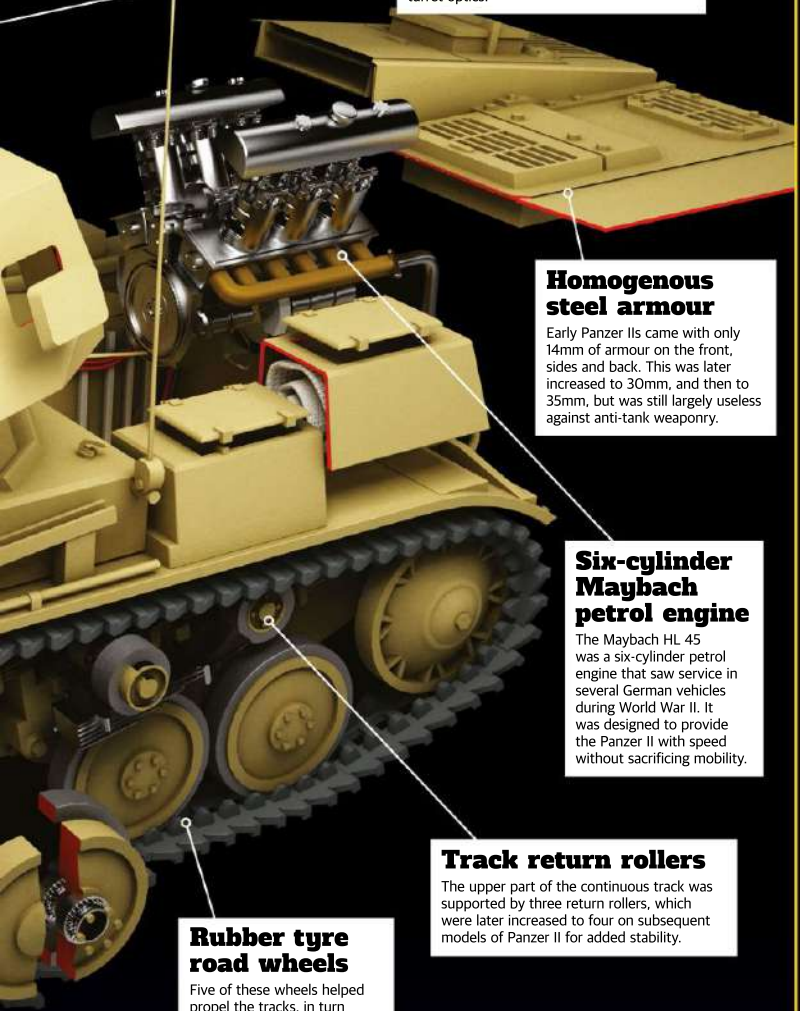
Illustration by: Alex Pang

Hand-cranked turret

The turret on the Panzer II was actually operated by the tank's commander rather than a specific gunner, as the limited space inside the machine only allowed for three crew members.

Vision ports

These were plentiful on the Panzer II, and absolutely essential in both offensive and defensive capacities. A Panzer II commander would operate the turret and so would need a secondary choice of viewport from his turret optics.



Homogenous steel armour

Early Panzer IIs came with only 14mm of armour on the front, sides and back. This was later increased to 30mm, and then to 35mm, but was still largely useless against anti-tank weaponry.

Six-cylinder Maybach petrol engine

The Maybach HL 45 was a six-cylinder petrol engine that saw service in several German vehicles during World War II. It was designed to provide the Panzer II with speed without sacrificing mobility.

Track return rollers

The upper part of the continuous track was supported by three return rollers, which were later increased to four on subsequent models of Panzer II for added stability.

Rubber tyre road wheels

Five of these wheels helped propel the tracks, in turn propelling the vehicle forwards. Later models introduced a torsion bar suspension system for the wheels, whereas early models favoured leaf-type springs.

More Key Weapons

JUNKERS JU 87

When four Luftwaffe air fleets attacked on 22 June 1941, the Soviet Air Force was decimated before Operation Barbarossa had even gotten into full swing. Germany had 1,280 aircraft involved in that attack, and afterwards its Stuka dive bombers had a clear run at the enemy.

SIG 33 ARTILLERY

Having found the strengths and weaknesses of Blitzkrieg during the invasion of Poland, the Germans realised that its SIG 33 howitzer was too slow to keep up with its tanks. Mounting the gun on a tank chassis for a Panzer I made it a much more mobile and effective weapon.

PANZER 35(T)

Inherited from Czechoslovakia after Germany's invasion and occupation, the Panzer 35(t) served in the invasion of Poland and France. While praised for its strength and adaptability, it was no match for the Soviet T-34 and once spare parts ran out it was no longer used.

T-34

Surprising the Nazis with its advanced armour and track design, the Soviet T-34 remains one of the best tanks ever made. However, the state of the Red Army and the shock Nazi assault meant that while it was pivotal in defending the USSR, it couldn't stop the initial charge.

B-4 HOWITZER

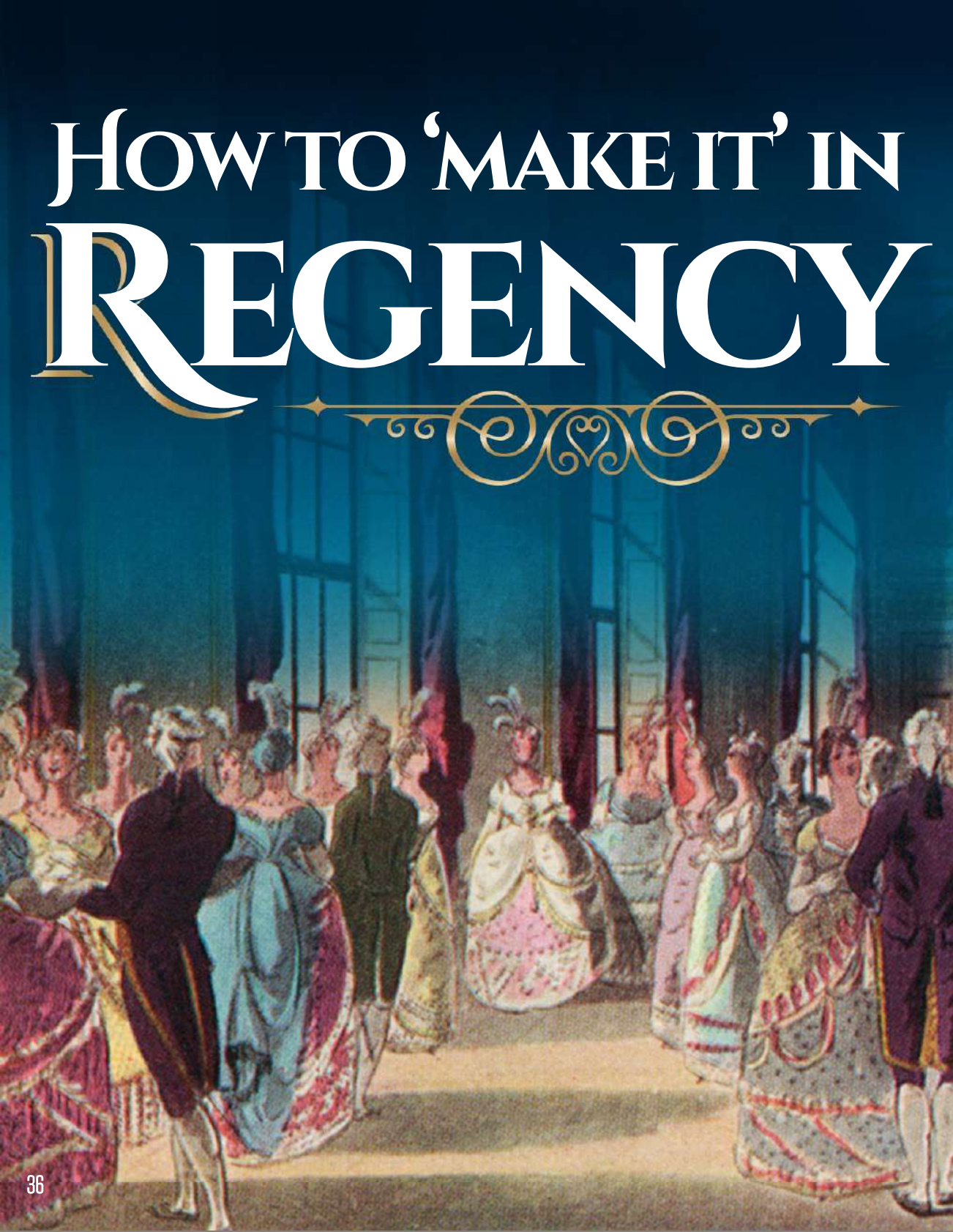
Dubbed Stalin's Sledgehammer by Nazi soldiers, the 203mm B-4 howitzer didn't come into its own until long after Operation Barbarossa began. They could not be deployed fast enough and many were captured as the Red Army retreated. They did help to turn the tide, however.

PTRD-41 ANTITANK RIFLE

Manufactured in rapid response to the German invasion, the PTRD compared favourably with German equivalents. The gun was around two metres long and weighed 17kg. These guns were essential in slowing down Germany's armoured divisions.

Image sources (top to bottom): wiki/Hardcdove Archive.com Q/Fotove, © Getty Images, wiki/Imperial War Museums, wiki/mocoov.com.ua, wiki/ria.ru, wiki/warbum.ru

How to 'make it' in Regency



LONDON

Our guide to surviving the social season in one piece

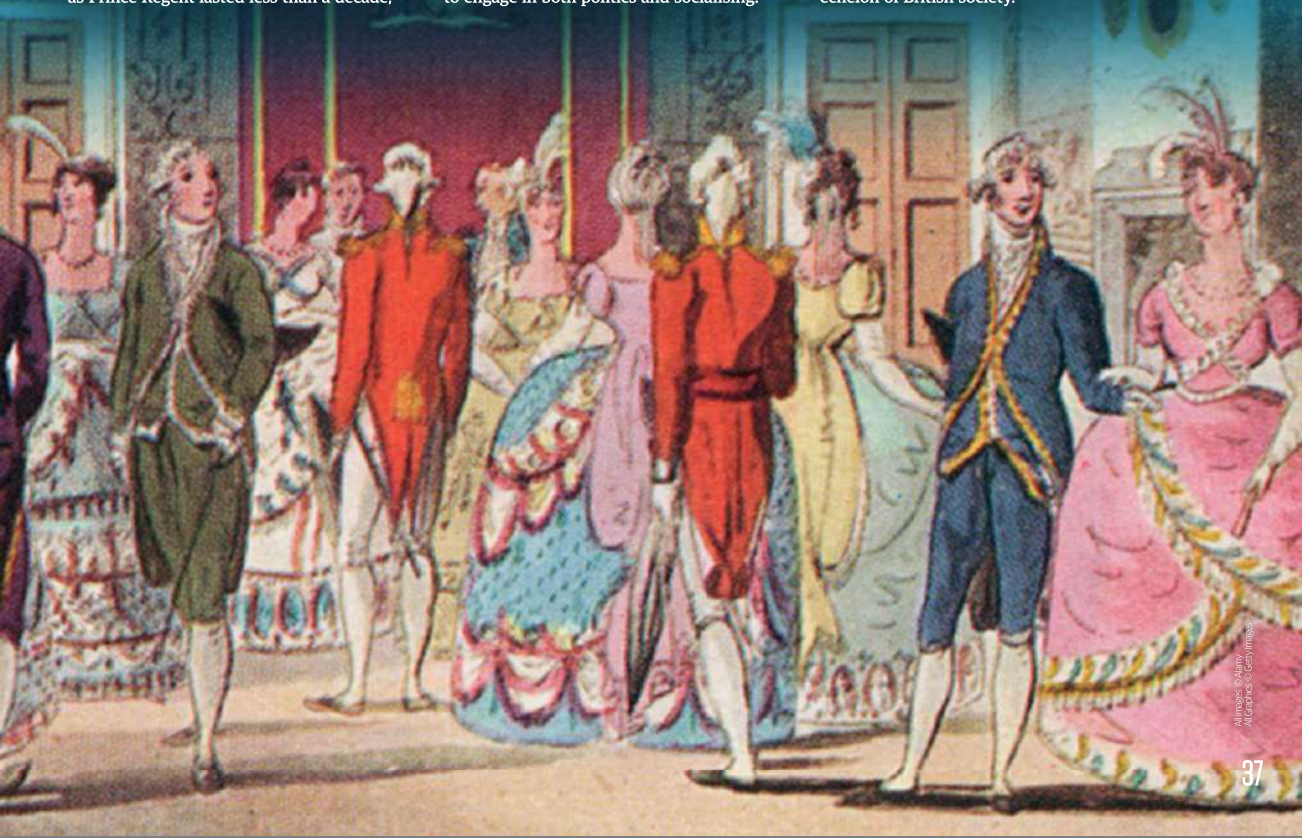
Written by Jessica Leggett

From 1811 to 1820, Prince George, the eldest son of King George III and Queen Charlotte, was appointed as Prince Regent of the United Kingdom on behalf of his father. The king, who had suffered from recurring bouts of mental illness and breakdowns, had been deemed unfit to rule. Although George's reign as Prince Regent lasted less than a decade, it was a time of great cultural, political and social change that subsequently became known as the Regency period.

When thinking of the Regency – or 19th century England in general – the social season probably crosses your mind. Coinciding with the sitting of Parliament, members of the upper class, known as 'the ton', would arrive in London from their stately, country homes to engage in both politics and socialising.

Although the timing of the season shifted, it typically started in January or February and ended in July or August and was a time for fashionable society gatherings, as well as the perfect opportunity to arrange marriages.

Surviving the social season revolved around many factors including etiquette, fashion and avoiding scandal – here's our guide on how to 'make it' among the highest echelon of British society.



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Do's & Don'ts

Do:

- Brush up on the rules of etiquette before heading to London
- Maintain formal behaviour even after you have been introduced to someone

Don't:

- Give overt displays of emotion, unless you have to faint
- Meet with a gentleman without a chaperone present

Mind Your Manners Etiquette was a high-stakes game

It was extremely important to be aware of the rules of etiquette before arriving in London for the social season. If you failed to meet the high standard of behaviour expected from members of the ton in their gatherings then your reputation would be at risk. This was especially a concern for the ladies, as a damaged reputation would hamper their marriage prospects and consequently their entire future.

To avoid making any embarrassing faux pas, many upper-class young ladies would prepare for the season by taking etiquette lessons. These lessons would include learning how to enter and leave a room; how to maintain a straight posture when sitting, standing and walking; and, of course, how to approach the queen and curtsy properly.

When it came to introductions, gentlemen were introduced to the ladies and not the other way round. A gentleman could not approach a lady without a formal introduction, and this could not occur until all parties agreed to be introduced. Remaining formal even after an introduction was a must and referring to another person by their first name (unless you were related) was a no-go.

Gentlemen were expected to be chivalrous while ladies had to be polite, elegant and calm, avoiding displays of obvious emotion, even when it came to laughing. However, while a lady had to be poised at all times, it was always appropriate for her to faint if faced with crude behaviour.

The biggest etiquette rule of them all was that a lady should never be alone in the company of a gentleman unless they were related or married to them, as this would attract gossip. If a lady did meet a gentleman a chaperone always had to be present. In fact, ladies were not supposed to go out alone at all and were always to be accompanied by another lady or servant – although this rule did relax towards the end of the Regency.

Get Your Dancing Shoes On A chance to make a good impression

No social season was complete without a dizzying array of balls to attend. The most important one was Queen Charlotte's Ball, where debutantes were formally presented to the court. Without attending the queen's ball, you could not join the marriage market.

Debutantes were typically between the ages of 16 and 18 when they were introduced to society. It was ideal for a lady with younger sisters to be married first before they were presented to society.

Balls and dances were supervised by a Master of Ceremony, who ensured that the event went smoothly, and who was responsible for formally introducing the young women and men.

Ladies would wear dance cards with a list of dances scheduled for the evening on their wrists. These cards helped them to keep track of the dances that they had promised to different partners – and potential suitors – throughout the night. However, a lady could not promise a dance until she was formally introduced to the gentleman in question.

Balls and dances gave ladies the perfect opportunity to meet several eligible gentlemen and vice versa. Yet a lady also had to take care not to dance with the same man more than twice – or, heaven forbid, all night – as this would attract gossip regarding the nature of their relationship and put her reputation at risk.

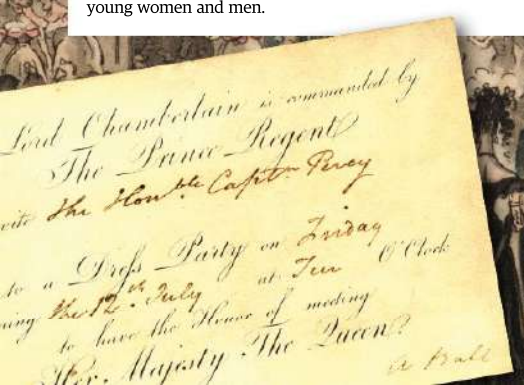
Do's & Don'ts

Do:

- Attend Queen Charlotte's Ball to signal your entrance into high society
- Fill your dance card and get to know your potential suitors

Don't:

- Promise a dance without being formally introduced
- Dance with the same gentleman more than twice in one night



Dress to impress

Keeping up with the latest fashion trends was a must

Ladies and gentlemen wishing to get through the season needed to ensure that their wardrobe was up to scratch unless they wanted to become social pariahs. Regency dresses were characterised by a raised, empire waistline and a narrow, ankle-length loose skirt. During the day, ladies were not to expose their chest or arms, and so their dresses would have long sleeves with a tucker or chemisette to cover the chest. They were supposed to wear bonnets if they were out in the daytime, and a lady always had to wear her hair up once she was formally out in society.

Meanwhile, it was acceptable to wear short sleeves and lower necklines in the evening, although ladies had to wear elbow-length white or light-coloured gloves made from leather or cotton. Dresses were made from sumptuous fabrics such as satin and they were decorated – albeit sparingly – with intricate embroidery.

For Queen Charlotte's Ball, debutantes had to wear a white court dress and a headdress decorated with ostrich feathers. The queen insisted on retaining the wide-hooped skirts, popular in the late 18th century, for court dress even though they had fallen out of fashion. These dresses also had a shortened bodice in line with Regency fashion and so the wide skirt began at the waistline under the bust. This resulted in a unique silhouette. The requirement for wide-hooped skirts finally ended when the Prince Regent ascended the throne as King George IV in 1820.

As for gentlemen, it was common for them to wear breeches during the early years of the Regency. They eventually moved on to long trousers or fitted pantaloons, worn with Hessian or two-toned top boots. White linen shirts with a straight, upright collar were a must, finished off with a cravat. Men would also wear a tall top hat when out during the day. Many men took their lead from Beau Brummell, the society figure and close friend of the Prince Regent, who set the leading trends for men's clothing.

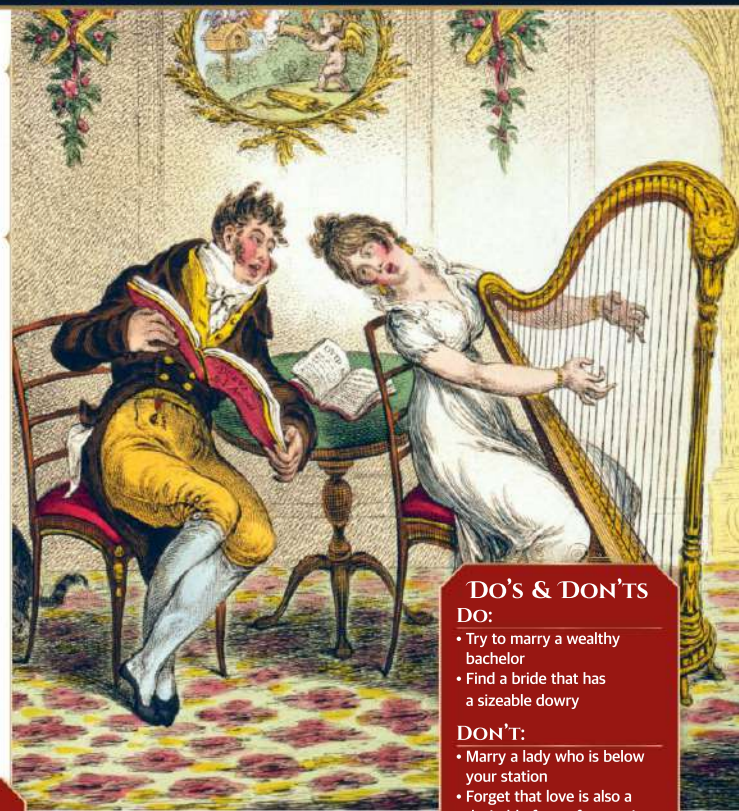
Do's & Don'ts

Do:

- Wear a bonnet or hat when you are out and about for the day
- Adhere to the rules of court dress for Queen Charlotte's Ball

Don't:

- Expose your arms or chest in the daytime if you are a lady
- Get caught wearing old-fashioned trends



Do's & Don'ts

Do:

- Try to marry a wealthy bachelor
- Find a bride that has a sizeable dowry

Don't:

- Marry a lady who is below your station
- Forget that love is also a desirable factor for marriage

Meet your match

Finding a spouse was the name of the game

To think of marriage among the upper classes in Regency England probably conjures up images of bossy mothers foisting their daughters on prospective suitors at every opportunity – and this isn't entirely wrong. Once young ladies had been officially introduced into society they needed to secure a suitable husband by joining the marriage market, the throng of single ladies and gentleman looking for a spouse.

Finding the right husband or wife involved many factors. Marriage offered an opportunity to climb the social ladder and form or strengthen family alliances, so marrying below one's station was not ideal, especially for gentlemen. If a lady did marry someone who was of a higher social status, not only would her status rise but so would her family's by virtue. Also, if the eldest daughter made a good marriage, it gave her sisters who were due to join the marriage market a better chance too.

Wealth was also an important factor because daughters, unlike sons, did not inherit their father's estate and so their financial security often depended on their future spouse. A good dowry boosted a lady's prospects and securing a wealthy husband also meant that she would have the means to take care of her family if needed. For gentlemen, marriage was all about producing an heir to secure his family line and finding a wife who was capable of managing the household.

Although there was a lot of pressure to find a good match in terms of wealth and social status, love was not always out of the question. If couples were desperate to be together but their parents disapproved, they always had the option of eloping to Scotland, where the law on marriage was not as restrictive. In particular, the Scottish village of Gretna Green became a popular destination for elopements.

Get Out and About Becoming the social butterfly of the season

There were a variety of activities to keep the ton entertained while in London for the season, such as card parties, museums, horse races, dinner parties, rides in the park, and the theatre. The more you were out and about, the more opportunities you had to socialise with others.

A classic season activity was to go promenading – a leisurely walk in a public place – allowing you to see and been seen by other members of high society. Courting couples would often promenade together, always in the presence of a chaperone, to show off their relationship.

Ladies and gentleman would also find themselves clamouring to be accepted into a range of exclusive social clubs in the city. The most famous and exclusive of them all was Almack's Assembly Rooms, also known as 'the Marriage Mart', where gentlemen would look for a suitable bride.

Almack's was run by the Lady Patronesses, the six or seven most influential ladies of the ton. These ladies decided who could be admitted into Almack's to attend the club's weekly ball and you could only purchase a voucher with their permission. This voucher could also be taken away by the Patronesses if they deemed you were not worthy after all, something that amounted to social disaster.

Their control over the club did not sit well with everyone, with Captain Gronow, a Welsh Grenadier Guards officer and writer, claiming "the female government of Almack's was a pure despotism and subject to all the caprices of despotic rule".

Another popular place to go was London's public pleasure gardens, such as the iconic Vauxhall Gardens. Visited by people from all social classes, these pleasure gardens hosted concerts, masquerades, costume balls, fireworks, amusement rides and even zoos – some even offered hot air balloon rides. However, under the cover of darkness the gardens also offered an opportunity for couples to mingle without a chaperone or even sneak off, something that would cause a huge scandal if they were caught.

Do's & Don'ts

Do:

- Be seen by other members of the ton
- Get yourself a voucher for the exclusive Almack's Assembly Rooms

Don't:

- Cross the Lady Patronesses unless you want to be ostracised from society
- Get caught having an illicit meeting with your lover

Avoid the Gossip Pages Endangering your reputation could mean game over

One of the biggest objectives of making it through the social season was to come out unscathed by scandal or gossip. For ladies especially, anything that had the potential to negatively affect their reputation could prevent them from securing that all-important match with a prized suitor.

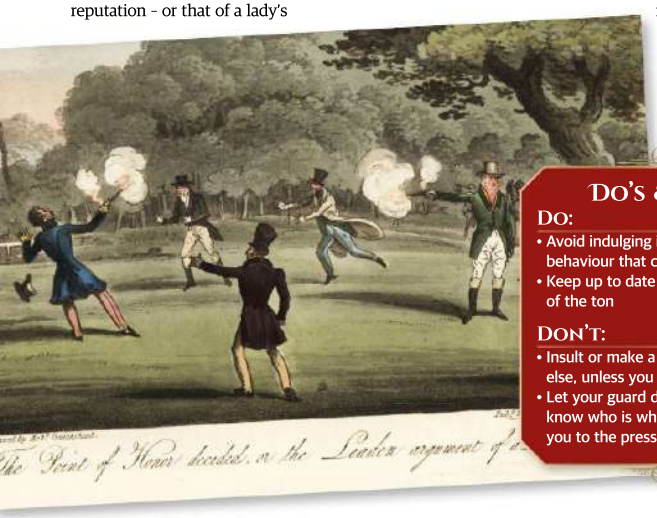
Reputation was so important that a gentleman could challenge another to a duel if they felt their reputation – or that of a lady's – had been slighted, to restore their honour. Duels were potentially deadly and illegal, so they typically took place at dawn so that the men were less likely to be caught.

It was during the Regency era that the steam-powered rotary press arrived, first adopted by *The Times* newspaper in 1814, making papers quicker and easier to print than ever before. Various newspaper columns and periodicals would be filled with pieces of salacious gossip, from affairs and elopements to gambling and hedonistic behaviour – often obtained from sources like servants or other ton members.

One such gossip column was the *Tête-à-Tête* in *Town and Country Magazine*, which predated the Regency as it folded in 1796, but had reported on illicit meetings between members of the elite.

Although the people involved in the scandals were not explicitly named, their initials would be included and this – coupled with plenty of hints – would be enough for many readers to guess their identity. Sordid stories from the press would be shared over gambling tables, at Almack's and in coffeehouses, so it was not long before scandals among the ton became wider knowledge. Gossip also spread thanks to the popularity of caricatures of the elite.

Even members of the royal family could not escape the papers. The Prince Regent's brother, the Duke of York, found himself embroiled in a huge scandal when it was discovered that his mistress, Mary Anne Clark, had been illegally selling military commissions and promotions, reportedly with his knowledge. As Commander-in-Chief of the army, the duke faced a parliamentary inquiry and although he was cleared, his love letters to Mary were widely published in the press. Consequently, he was forced out from his position, but he was eventually reinstated.



Do's & Don'ts

Do:

- Avoid indulging in disreputable behaviour that can land you in hot water
- Keep up to date with the latest gossip of the ton

Don't:

- Insult or make a slur against someone else, unless you want to end up in a duel
- Let your guard down, because you don't know who is whispering stories about you to the press

George III, Queen Charlotte and their six eldest children, in a 1770 portrait by Johan Zoffany

Behind the Glitz and Glamour

Historian Catherine Curzon tells us what the social season was really like

What was it really like for the young women searching for eligible husbands in the marriage market? Was it as glamorous and exciting as period dramas would like to have us believe?
It was hard work! The jewel in the London social season was Queen Charlotte's Ball, where debutantes were presented to the queen. From that moment on, the girls were under intense pressure to secure a highly prized bachelor in their first season. If they didn't, their chances at a good marriage next year plummeted.

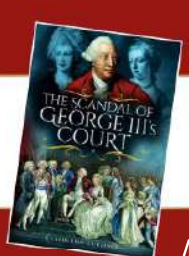
How costly was it for upper-class families to keep up with the fashions of high society?
It was enormously expensive. But it was vital for families to make it clear that they were rich enough to keep up – a bride needed a dowry and the bigger, the better. To put the figures in perspective, Mr Darcy's much-vaunted £10,000 per year would be worth millions today.

How influential were scandal sheets? Did they really have the power to seriously damage someone's reputation?
Though scandal sheets came later, there was plenty of gossip in the Regency press and readers lapped it up. Though scandal could destroy a reputation, for those willing to embrace their notoriety it could lead to fame and sometimes even fortune.

Was it possible for women to remain unmarried and support themselves with independent careers during the Regency period?
It was possible, but not common. Bluestocking Elizabeth Carter became renowned as a classicist and translator, while Anne 'Gentleman Jack' Lister famously controlled a portfolio of business interests that included mining, agriculture and quarrying, as well as presiding over Shibden Hall with her wife, Ann Walker.

In your opinion, what is one of the biggest misconceptions about the Regency social season and the other cultural practices around it?
While it's commonly believed that love had no part in the marriage market, that wasn't always the case. After all, Princess Charlotte of Wales refused to marry the husband chosen for her by her father, the Prince Regent. Instead she stood her ground and married for love to a prince who had plenty of pedigree, but precious little money.

The Scandal of George III's Court
by Catherine Curzon is out now from Pen & Sword



The History Of Genies

Looking past stories of magic lamps and wish-granting entities, we examine the stories and legends of the supernatural creatures known as jinn

Written by Robert W Lebling Jr

The jinn (commonly called genies in the West) are taken seriously and regarded as real, tangible beings by a large segment of the world's population. Millions of people in Arab North Africa, the Middle East and other Islamic regions have been brought up to regard the jinn as a normal, natural part of their world. This belief has been eroded to some extent in modern times, as educated elites in the Arab-Islamic countries, influenced by Western thought, have come to regard the jinn as essentially a spiritual, or even a metaphorical, concept.

But Muslims do not reject the notion of jinn entirely. The holy scripture of Islam, the *Quran*, and the Tradition (or Hadith) of the Prophet Muhammad describe the jinn as an actual, intelligent life form - beings that, though different from humans, share a number of attributes with them. Jinn reproduce like humans, and people the world with their offspring. They are male and female, and they raise families. They possess free will, and they make choices in life. They accept or reject God. Some become renegades, and are classified as demons or ghouls. The jinn generally keep to their own communities, but on occasion they interact with humans, sometimes even sexually.

According to the *Quran*, God created humans from clay and jinn from smokeless fire. The jinn, whose name comes from an Arabic root meaning to 'conceal' or 'cover with darkness', are able to hide themselves from humans, often by shapeshifting, disguising themselves as animals like snakes, dogs and cats.

2x © Alamy

LEFT The jinn as they appear in a 1582 Ottoman manuscript

What are jinn?

In Arab tradition, the jinni (to use the singular form) is a spirit creature, often linked to nature, which can manifest itself physically. The jinni has great powers - sometimes miraculous abilities that humans lack. There are five types of jinn: jann, jinn, shaitan, ifrit and marid.

Of the five classes of spirit beings, the jann are described as the least powerful,

the jinn as mostly evil but sometimes good, the shaitans as imps or devils, the ifrits as terrible and evil, and the marids as the most powerful and most evil. The leader of all the jinn is Iblis – the Devil and Prince of Evil. The good jinn frequently take on the shape of household serpents. These jinn resemble the ancient Roman genii, attendant spirits similar to guardian angels.

Some scholars say the earliest jinn were viewed as malicious nature demons, living in deserted or contaminated places and often taking the form of animals. Other experts contend that the jinn originated as early deities, often nature gods and goddesses, who were dethroned and displaced by later, more sophisticated beliefs but not totally discarded or forgotten about.

Islam absorbed these spirits from Middle Eastern folk belief. The *Quran* devotes a chapter, or sura, to these spirit beings: Chapter 72, Surat al-Jinn. It speaks of a group of jinn who listened to the Prophet Muhammad and decided to accept Islam. Some jinn also became Christians or Jews, as well as other faiths.

The jinn are normally invisible, but they can manifest themselves in almost any form, human or animal. One favourite shape is the snake, but other obnoxious creatures – such as beetles, toads and scorpions – may be jinn in disguise. One family in the Arabian city of Mecca were so plagued by the jinn that they went into the desert and began killing all the insects and reptiles they could find. The jinn were so depleted in number that they eventually called a truce. Often the jinn resemble goats; their relationship in concept to the satyrs of classical Greek and Roman mythology is apparent but not fully explainable as a parallel.

Jinn delight in punishing humans for any harm done to them, intentionally or unintentionally, and they are believed to be responsible for many diseases and

> "Jinn delight in punishing humans and are believed to be responsible for many diseases and accidents"

BELOW
A french illustration of a jinn from 1847

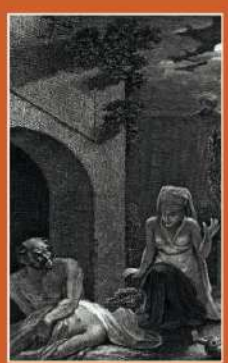
© Alamy

Mischievous jinn

A few examples of the more malevolent spirits and the role they play

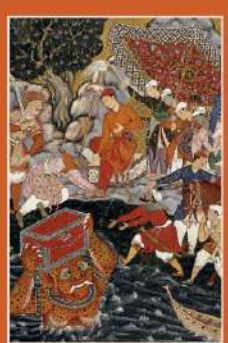
SHAITAN

A class of unbelieving jinn, Shaitan are either male or female, evil in nature and hideous. In the *Quran* they are the most frequently mentioned supernatural entity. They function as devils, and belong to the forces commanded by Iblis. They are excellent tempters of men and in folklore use disease as a weapon, existing in a place between light and darkness. They are also known for eating excrement.



GHOUL

Belonging to the diabolical class of jinn, these creatures exist in the graveyards and abandoned places of the world, such as deserts, and lure travellers to their doom. They are the children of Iblis and it is often stated that they had the ability to shapeshift. When the word entered Western folklore it became more strongly associated with a creature or individual who feeds on the flesh of the dead.



IFRIT

In the *Quran*, the term Ifrit refers to a rebellious type of jinn that lives in cities deep underground. These jinn are interesting due to living in societies similar to humans, with kings, queens and hierarchical structure. This group can also marry humans and even have children with their human partners. These are winged creatures of smoke and can be either male or female.

Images sources: www.wikipedia.com, www.the-arabian-nights-entertainments.net, Bodleian Museum

all kinds of accidents; however, those human beings who know the proper magical procedures can exploit the jinn to their advantage.

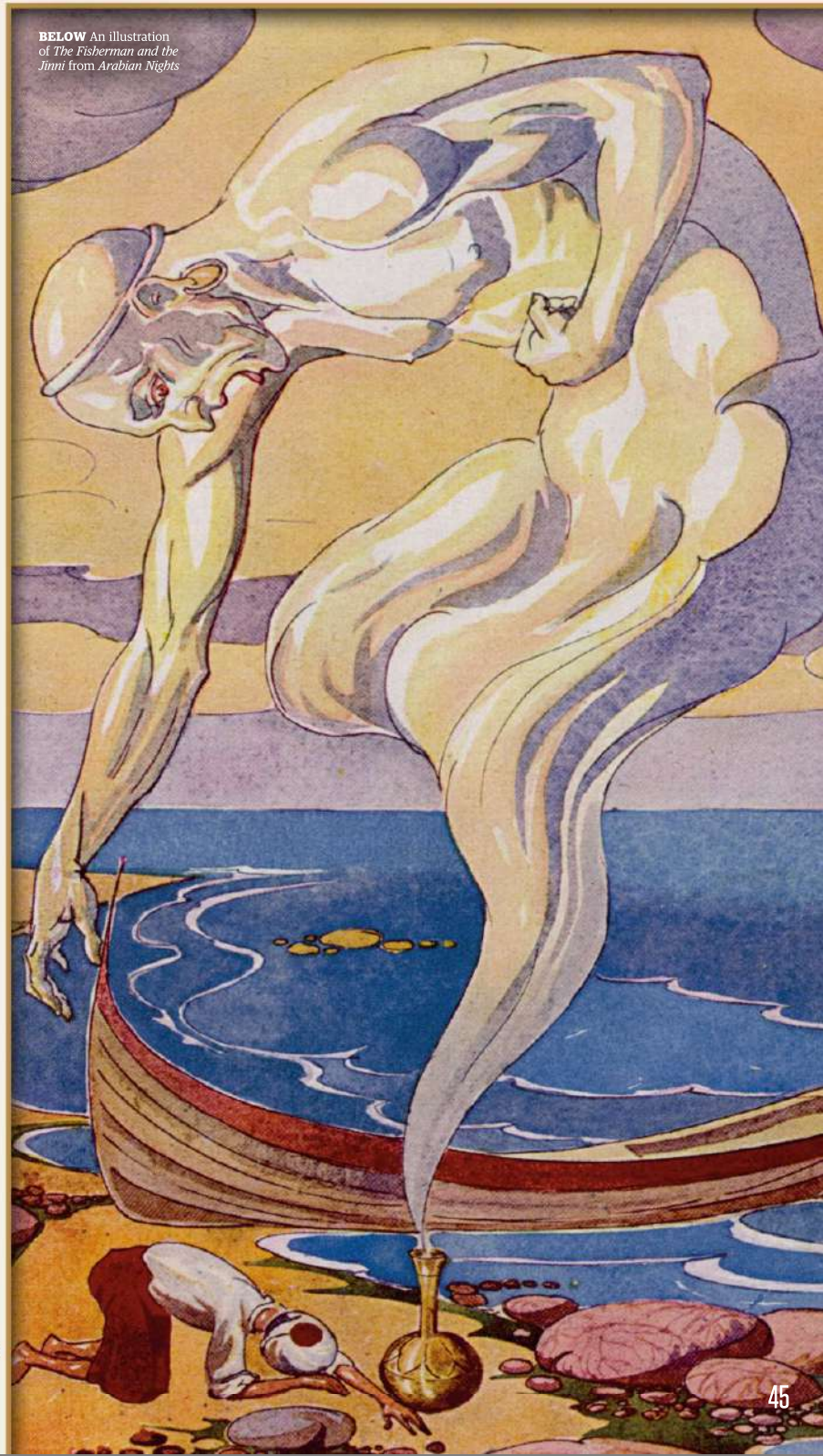
Belief in jinn was common in early Arabia, where they were said to inspire poets and soothsayers. The Prophet Muhammad originally feared that his revelations might be the work of jinn. The existence of jinn was recognised in official Islam, which held that they, like human beings, would have to face judgement and eventual salvation or damnation. Jinn, especially through their association with magic, have always been favourite figures in North African, Egyptian, Syrian, Persian and Turkish folklore and are at the centre of a vast corpus of popular literature, appearing notably in *The Thousand and One Nights*.

The Victorian-era explorer and translator of *The Thousand Nights and a Night* (the title of the 1885 English edition), Sir Richard F Burton, defined the jinn in helpful detail:

"Jinni – The Arab singular (whence the French 'genie'); fem. Jinniyah; the Div and Rakshah of old Guebre-land and the 'Rakshasa', or 'Yaksha', of Hinduism. It would be interesting to trace the evident connection, by no means 'accidental', of 'Jinn' with the 'Genius' who came to the Romans through the Asiatic Etruscans, and whose name I cannot derive from 'Gignomai' or 'genitus'. He was unknown to the Greeks, who had the Daimon, a family which separated, like the Jinn and the Genius, into two categories, the good (Agatho-daemons) and the bad (Kako-daemons). We know nothing concerning the Jinn amongst the pre-Moslemitic or pagan Arabs: the Moslems made him a supernatural anthropoid being, created of subtle fire (*Quran* chapts, xv. 27; lv. 14), not of earth like man, propagating his kind, ruled by mighty kings, the last being Jan bin Jan, missionarised by Prophets and subject to death and Judgement. From the same root are 'Junun' = madness (i.e., possession or obsession by the Jinn) and 'Majnun' = a madman. According to R. Jeremiah bin Eliazar in Psalm xli. 5, Adam was excommunicated for one hundred and thirty years during which he begat children in his own image (Gen. v. 3) and these were Mazikeen or Shedeem - Jinns."

Pre-Islamic Arab views

Arab belief in the jinn predates Islam by many centuries and played an important role in the 7th-century environment in which the Islamic faith was born, as German anthropologist Joseph Henninger points out in *Pre-Islamic Bedouin Religion*.



BELOW An illustration of *The Fisherman and the Jinni* from *Arabian Nights*

5x © Alamy

FAR-LEFT A 17th century depiction of jinn from a work by Muhammad al-Qazwini

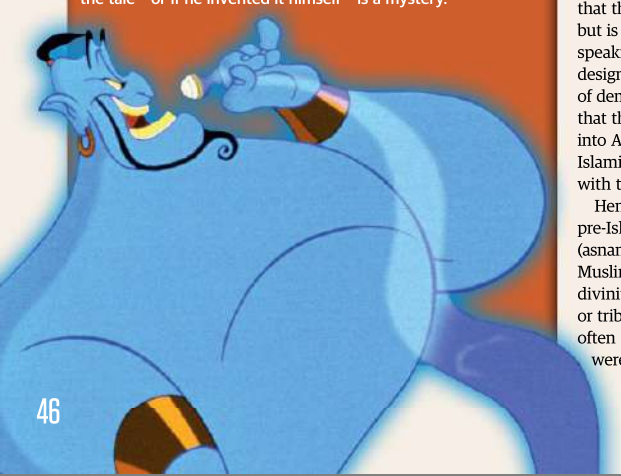
LEFT There are many different types of jinn

BELOW Iblis, the Prince of Darkness and the Devil

Jinn to genie

Magic lamps and three wishes – where does the genie as we know it come from?

Perhaps the most famous image of a genie is Disney's blue-skinned, wise cracking entity voiced by Robin Williams that appeared in the 1992 animated version of *Aladdin*. This version of a jinn, living inside a magical lamp and granting three wishes, sums up some of the most commonly understood attributes and behaviours of jinn for most in the West. While two stories in *A Thousand and One Nights* pertain to a jinn being trapped inside a brass container and feature wishes (not to mention tales of King Solomon trapping jinn to harness their power) it is the story of Aladdin that truly formulates the modern concept of the genie. Not part of the original manuscript, it was French translator Antoine Galland who added the story, along with the tales of Ali Baba and Sinbad. Galland was originally told the story by a Syrian storyteller, Hanna Diyab. However, where Diyab originally heard the tale – or if he invented it himself – is a mystery.



According to this ancient belief, spirits were thought to haunt dark and desolate locales in the desert, and people need to protect themselves from these creatures. "It is often assumed that belief in the jinn who were thought to dwell in the desert originated with the Bedouin and was passed from them to the settled tribes," Henninger says. "This assumption does not seem to me to be well founded."

Bedouin tribesmen who are at home in the desert experience much less fear in those regions than do villagers or townspeople, who are often terrified by the desert and are convinced that all sorts of demons and monsters live there. Among Arabs today, Henninger asserts, "Belief in spirits is much more intense among the [settled] agricultural population than among the Bedouin." This is not to say, however, that the Bedouins of the Arabian Peninsula disbelieve in the jinn. This belief is very much a part of their everyday lives.

Another scholar, WF Albright, believes that the word jinn is not originally Arabic, but is derived from Aramaic. Aramaic-speaking Christians used the word to designate pagan gods reduced to the status of demons. Albright concludes from this that the jinn themselves were introduced into Arabic folklore only late in the pre-Islamic period. But not all scholars agree with this view.

Henninger studied local Arabian pre-Islamic divinities – called 'idols' (asnam) or 'companions' (shuraka') by Muslim authors. Cults worshipping these divinities were limited to specific areas or tribes. Such pre-Islamic deities are often called 'companions' because they were sometimes – mistakenly, from the Muslim viewpoint – associated with Allah. In most cases very little hard information has survived about these deities. In some cases, we don't even know their real names or where they were worshipped. Sometimes they are referred to only by a title, such as 'lord of such-and-such a place'.

The myths which might have told us more about these divinities and their characteristics are almost entirely lost. So we often have trouble deciding whether a specific deity originated with the Bedouin or with settled peoples. In ancient times, Bedouin often 'borrowed' gods from settled communities.

ABOVE Aladdin visited by the Genie of the Lamp, from a French edition of the *Arabian Nights*

Henninger describes pre-Islamic deity worship as "chaotic" and is reluctant to characterise the many gods as a pantheon. Among these divinities there may be some that were originally jinn, mythical ancestors or legendary heroes, who were elevated gradually to the rank of god, he says. However, some of the gods developed directly from personifying forces of nature. Quzah, for example – a pre-Islamic deity worshipped by the people of Muzdalifah near Mecca – had the clear features of a storm or weather god.

The oasis-city of Palmyra in present-day Syria was a crossroads of peoples and cultures in ancient times. It was settled by Amorites, Aramaeans and Arabs in that order. At various times, Palmyra was subject to the influence of Phoenicians, Babylonians, Greeks, Romans and others. Impressive ruins, including temples, survive to this day. Ancient jinn reigned in Palmyra as tutelary or guardian deities.

Palmyra's Arabian gods are often called gny' or ginnaya (plural ginnayê), Aramaic for the Roman-origin genii or tutelary deities. The Palmyrene ginnaya is essentially the same as the Latin genius. Classical writers acknowledged the existence of deities who were tutelaries of persons and places.

Like the jinn of modern Bedouin, Palmyra's ginnayê were said to resemble humans in appearance and behaviour. Palmyra's artists portrayed them in the specific roles that the deities played in Palmyrene society. These genii were tasked with protecting human lives and enterprises. The people of Palmyra called the deities šbb', or 'close ones', suggesting that these divinities were viewed as the guardians of people. In time, they became identified with Christian angels.

Islamic categories

From the Islamic era onward, jinn were characterised as consisting of various categories. The Prophet Muhammad was quoted by one of his companions as saying: "The jinn are of three types: a type that has wings, and they fly through the air; a type that looks like snakes and dogs; and a type that stops for a rest, then resumes its journey."

Medieval Islamic scholars identified various types of jinn according to their behaviour. Yusuf ibn Abdul Barr of Cordoba, a celebrated scholar of Islamic traditions in the 11th century, said the jinn were of various types or categories. When speaking of jinn broadly, he said they should be called 'jinni'; the jinn that lived among humanity were 'aamar' (plural 'amaar'); jinn that 'antagonised' children were referred to as 'arwaah'; evil jinn who bother people in general were called 'shaitan' (plural 'shayateen'); while powerful, harmful jinn were called 'afreet'.

In the 14th century, an Egyptian academic named Muhammad al-Damiri wrote about the jinn in a 'parazoological' work called *Hayat al-Hayawan* (*The Life of Animals*), a text that describes 731 different animal species, with numerous digressions into theological opinion, folklore and the traditions of the Prophet Muhammad. Al-Damiri described jinn as "ethereal bodies capable of forming themselves into different shapes. They have reason, understanding and the capability for hard work. They are different from humans."

A modern view

In modern times, Muhammad Asad, a highly regarded, Austrian-born Muslim scholar who converted from Judaism (his birth name was Leopold Weiss) described jinn as "certain sentient organisms of so fine a nature and of a physiological composition so different from our own that they are not normally accessible to our sense-perception... [I]f we assume, as we must, that there are living organisms whose biological premises are entirely different from our own, it is only logical to assume that our physical senses can establish contact with them only under very exceptional circumstances; hence the description of them as 'invisible beings'."

Asad believed that the, "occasional, very rare crossing of paths between their life-mode and ours may well give rise to strange – because unexplainable – manifestations, which man's primitive fantasy has subsequently interpreted as ghosts, demons and other such 'supernatural' apparitions."

> "Al-Damiri described jinn as 'ethereal bodies capable of forming themselves into different shapes'"

Asad's explanation suggests that jinn live in another dimension or plane of space-time, and that they occasionally enter ours and interact with us. This concept takes us into the realm of science fiction – or does it? Recent work by physicists on the cutting edge of quantum and superstring theory supports the notion that our universe may possess many more dimensions than the four we are accustomed to – length, width, height and time. In January of this year, European scientists published a paper proposing the existence of a portal to the fifth dimension. It may turn out, then, that in terms of modern science, the idea of jinn is not so fanciful after all.

Legends of the Fire Spirits: Jinn and Genies from Arabia to Zanzibar by Robert Lebling is published by Tauris Parke (paperback £12.99) and is out now

© Getty Images

EXPERT BIO

MICHAEL LIVINGSTON

Michael Livingston is a professor of military and medieval history and two-time winner of the Distinguished Book Award from the International Society of Military History. He is the secretary general for the United States Commission on Military History.

THE BATTLE THAT DEFINED BRITAIN

We talk to Michael Livingston about the Battle of Brunanburh and the hunt to find where this pivotal conflict took place

Written by Callum McKelvie

The history of Britain is defined by war, with numerous conflicts proving to be significant turning points in the history of the islands. From Hastings in 1066 to World War II, all have shaped the development of the Britain we know today. Yet there is one battle whose role was just as crucial but is rarely spoken about outside of historical circles. The Battle of Brunanburh is little-known but has an air of mystery all its own. Michael Livingston, the author of *Never Greater Slaughter: Brunanburh and the Birth of England*, explains why Brunanburh deserves to be remembered alongside Hastings and Bosworth as a definitive point in British history.

What was the lead up to the Battle of Brunanburh?

Brunanburh was a battle fought in 937 between the growing realm of the English (who were led by King Athelstan) and an absolutely massive alliance of Scots, Britons and Vikings. Traditionally, these had all been enemies with each other but for this moment in 937 they banded together to end England once and for all. Athelstan had taken control of York from the hands of the Vikings and in 934 had marched an army deep into Scotland. It was clear nobody was in a position to take him on individually, as it were. We don't know all the details, but these three kings decided to set aside their differences and say: 'We can kill each other next year, but this year let's kill the English!' So they all got together to do this. This was a fight for nothing less than the survival of England.

What were the key events of the battle?

The first key event was the fact that they had to get their armies together, which was an extraordinary achievement in and of itself, and they were able to establish a beachhead. Next, they moved into English territories. Athelstan at that point came out to meet them and the battle took place. We don't know a lot of details. We know that it was an all-day battle (which is rare, most battles didn't last that long) and we also know that it took place somewhere that was called Brunanburh. It does occasionally go by other names in other sources, but that's the main name that sticks to it. We also know that the English won when the shieldwall of the allied forces was broken. The allies were then forced to retreat to the sea and the English cut them down all the way to the shore. For generations afterwards Brunanburh was referred to only as the 'great battle', it didn't even have to be

© Getty Images

named. You would just say the great battle, and people knew what you meant because it had been such a terrifying threat.

Who was Egil Skallagrimsson and what was his role in the battle's history?

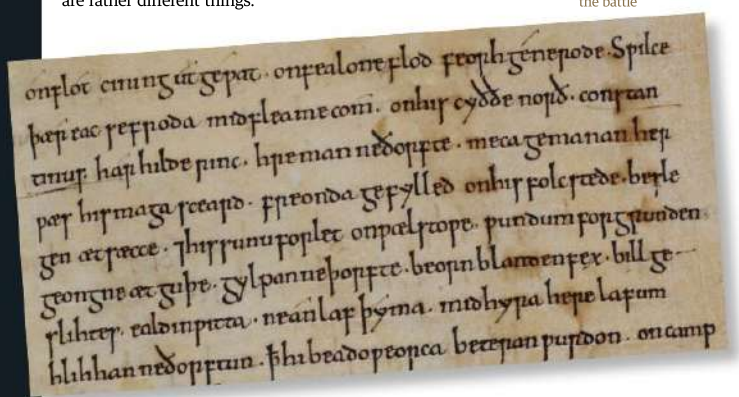
He was a warrior and a poet, and he was fantastic at both of these things. He was great at killing a lot of people and writing a terrific poem about it. In the great saga of his life, *Egil's Saga*, he actually fights in a battle called Vinheithr. That was a huge battle, which involved Scots, Vikings and King Athelstan. It has long been believed that this was synonymous with the Battle of Brunanburh, but I'm not so sure. It fits much of what we know about Brunaburh but it doesn't fit everything. I think it's actually a mash-up of several other conflicts with Brunanburh, like a remix of an old song. It has taken Brunanburh and welded into it a myriad of other conflicts, like a greatest hits. But Egil's story is closely tied to the Brunanburh myth as a result of this, so I use him as a figure to allow us to get closer to what it would have been like on the battlefield, which was a horror none of us can fully appreciate.

What would you say were some of the biggest consequences of the battle?

The biggest impact was that England survived. This was the battle where England comes of age, having faced an absolutely existential threat. This was a threat to its very existence, to its survival as a nation, and it made it through. Even more than that, Athelstan's victory set the precedent for what constituted England itself; a map of his England after Brunanburh is remarkably close to a map of what England is today. This was a battle that gave England a chance to actually survive to the present day – it all could have been lost.

The location of the battlefield seems to be a point of debate. Why is this?

In one sense, I wish I knew! As a military historian I understand wanting to know where something happened, because that helps me understand *how* it happened. However, for a lot of folks, Brunanburh inspires passions at a much deeper level. They have a truly personal investment in locating it. I think, in the end, Brunanburh is a mystery and a puzzle. We've got all the pieces, but we don't have the picture, and people are drawn to that kind of thing. A lot of the communications I get are from people who have become invested in their picture of the battle that they've made, and they want to be right about that. As a researcher, however, I don't want to be right, I want to get it right, which are rather different things.



BELOW A fragment of the Brunanburh poem, dealing with Constantine's role in the battle

What can you tell us about some of the contemporary attempts to find the battlefield?

In 2011, I led a multinational team of experts in putting together what was called the Brunanburh casebook. To use the puzzle metaphor, we attempted to put all the pieces that we had in one box, all the available facts, in one place. Having done this, we then wanted to show how we thought it went together, what our picture was. As part of that we stated where we thought the Battlefield could be located and put an 'X' on the map, right in the middle of the Wirral Valley. We weren't the first to suggest that but we brought new information and new confidence, though we still lacked actual physical proof. Wirral Archaeology is a project that has done an absolutely great job of putting actual spades into the ground and finding out what's beneath. They have found some truly intriguing artefacts that might relate to a battle in the 10th century that involved English and Viking fighters, and there's not many things that fit that bill quite like Brunanburh does. So the work may still be at an early stage but it is looking very good. If they are truly en route to finding the site right now that gives us a chance to understand not only the battle itself, but 10th century warfare too. It's an exciting time.

What inspired you to retell the story?

I'd wanted to return to Brunanburh since writing the casebook in 2011. I was initially drawn to the story due to the fascinating mysteries surrounding it. Here's this amazing battle, for which we have a beautiful, beautiful poem in Old English, and yet we still know so little about it. Realising this, I wanted to know more. After the casebook I knew I wanted to come back to it but I was spurred into doing it now for really two reasons. One was talking with Bernard Cornwell [author of historical fiction such as *The Last Kingdom*] about the battle. He wanted to know what else I had that I hadn't published on the web. The second thing was

LEFT A illustrated depiction of the battle, which goes some way to displaying the terrible carnage

BELOW Thorolf Skallagrimsson, a character in *Egil's Saga*, at the Battle of Brunanburh

"This was a fight for nothing less than the survival of England"

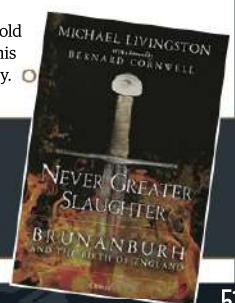
spending some time with the Wirral Archaeology folks, seeing the artefacts that they were pulling out of the ground and thinking about ways that supported the conclusion that this is where the battle happened. I felt like this was a good time to tell this story. I hoped to bring awareness of this amazingly impactful moment in English history to a wider audience that had probably never heard of it.

How do you go about researching a battle about which so little is known?

In the intelligence services here in the United States, we engage in what's called all-source analysis. If you're trying to locate a threat, you bring every thread of information available to you and weave it together to identify that threat. Writing about Brunanburh is the same thing. The case that I make in *Never Greater Slaughter* is built on history and chronicles and the kind of thing that everybody uses. But it's also built on linguistics, poetics and some remarkable work that's been done using regional DNA analysis. It uses LIDAR technology, which is an absolutely extraordinary tool that utilises satellite technology to more or less erase the vegetation on a landscape so you can dial back 1,000 years to try and figure out what this landscape looked like in 937 and how this dictates what an army could or couldn't do. My students are always kind laughing at me because I'll get all excited about title charts or something because *any* scrap of information is additional. It may be that little snippet which is the key that allows us to fit everything together. It's a pain and I'm sometimes jealous of my colleagues who are working on things they've got video for, which must be just marvellous! I'm dealing with something that has so little information but when you put all these scraps and puzzle pieces together it's quite remarkable how much we can understand about the past.

Given the level of intense research, was writing the book a long process?

As far as getting all the material was concerned, it was at least a decade in the making. The actual writing of the book was a very short process and took just a couple of months. What I was working with was a much, much bigger pool of information than previously and I was also very fortunate that I had the ability to call upon Wirral Archaeology and ask about their latest finds. They would pull something out of the ground and send me a picture of it. I also worked with a number of researchers around the world on the Brunanburh casebook and so I had a veritable army of people who wanted to see this story told and were willing to do anything they could to help me do it. I can only hope that I told it well and that it will bring to light this remarkable moment in English history.



Never Greater Slaughter: Brunanburh and the Birth of England
is out now from Osprey Publishing, priced £20

JUST WHAT THE ANCIENT DOCTOR ORDERED

A spoonful of sugar helps the medicine go down, and you'd probably need it with these ancient remedies

Written by Kate Marsh

Graphics: © Getty Images

For as long as there have been humans, there has been disease and illness. And for as long as there has been disease, there have been remedies. Some have been so effective that they have remained in use for hundreds, if not thousands, of years, others... less so. It stands to reason that different cultures and civilisations have had their own medicines and supposed cures. People used what they had available to them, especially in antiquity when trade wasn't what it is today. But while their methods may have seemed successful, there are some that fell out of use over time. And with some of these 'cures', it's easy to see why. Hindsight is 20/20, after all.

Here, we examine ten ancient remedies for all manner of ailments. Some may surprise you, some may shock you, and some will definitely seem a little bit macabre.

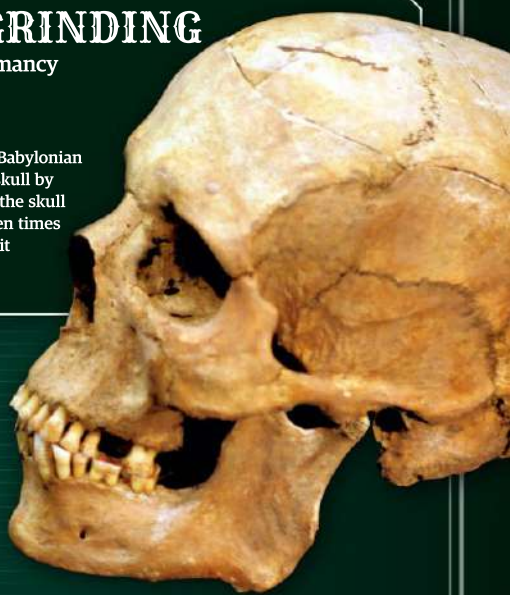
SKULLS STOP TEETH GRINDING

The Babylonians meddled with necromancy

BABYLONIA

Ill in Babylonia? The most probable reason was straightforward enough: you were being punished by a god or demonic forces. If your problem was that a deceased family member was trying to get in touch, it presented as grinding your teeth while you slept – and that had a very particular cure.

The best way to exorcise the spirit, Babylonian doctors believed, was to sleep with a skull by your side for a week. That wasn't all – the skull needed to be kissed and/or licked seven times during each night. It's safe to say that it probably didn't work.



GLADIATOR BLOOD CURES EPILEPSY

Enabling Romans to fight illness since the 1st century CE

ROME

Epileptics in the Roman Empire didn't need to worry, there was a cure on hand. The blood of fallen gladiators (or sometimes their livers) apparently held the properties needed to rid sufferers of their ailment. It didn't just happen once, either; multiple ancient historians reported this working. But why?

It most definitely didn't work – it's much more likely that a series of spontaneous recoveries made the Romans believe it was successful. But what the Romans themselves saw was a religious experience. Gladiator bouts had started as Etruscan funeral games and their religious significance continued into the Roman period. As a result, the fighters' blood was thought to have near-magical properties.

Of course, all good things must come to an end, and when gladiator fighting went out of style around 400 CE, executed individuals took their place and the 'cure' carried on.

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Image source: www.shaw.ca

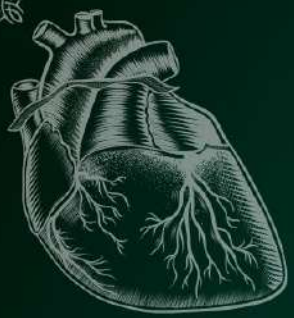
ELEPHANT BILE FRESHENS BREATH

One civilisation's answer to mouthwash

CHINA

Biles have always been used in traditional Chinese medicine, but in antiquity it was the elephants' turn. Mentioned in Lei Xiao's *Treatise on Preparation of Drugs*, dating back to the 5th century, it was used to treat halitosis, or bad breath. While it seems a little counterintuitive, ancient Chinese doctors swore by it, diluting it with water and ordering their patients to gargle the mixture.

That wasn't the only use for elephant bile, though. It could also be dried and ground into pills with gallbladder biles of the common carp, bear, ox and musk. Taken with green tea, these pills could apparently cure blindness from optic atrophy and glaucoma.



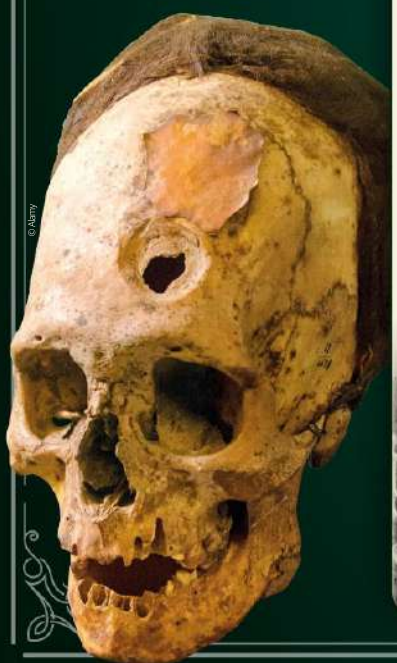
TREPANATION FOR HEADACHES

The oldest trick in the book

PERU

Trepanation is the oldest known surgery in the world. Decidedly gruesome, it's the act of cutting into, drilling or scraping a hole in a patient's scalp – and, unsurprisingly, not everyone survived it. That didn't stop the ancient Peruvians, though.

In the Andean highlands, trepanated skulls have been found dating back to 400 BCE. In fact, more have been found there than in any other ancient civilisation in the world – and it was a widespread practice with its roots in prehistory.



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PREGNANCY STOPS WANDERING WOMBS

Carrying a child will cure you, even if childbirth kills you

GREECE

In Ancient Greece, one of the most dangerous things facing women was a 'wandering womb'. According to Greek doctors like Hippocrates, a woman's womb could move up in the body, causing sluggishness. If it moved too far down, it could cause death. Aretaeus of Cappadocia famously said that it "moved of itself hither and thither in the flanks".

So what was the cure? The most well known was simple: getting pregnant as often as possible. It was thought that this would keep the womb occupied so it would cease its wandering around the body.

BLOODLETTING FOR BALANCE

This gruesome practice was around before the Middle Ages

GREECE

Although it's thought to have originated in Ancient Egypt, the Greeks were always fond of bloodletting as a medical cure. They believed that some diseases were caused by an overabundance of blood, and doctors like Erasistratus in the 4th century BCE were keen advocates of this theory. That meant some blood needed to be let out of the body to bring everything back into balance.

This idea of balance was furthered a few hundred years later by the Greco-Roman doctor Galen, who encouraged the widespread use of the practice throughout the Roman Empire. In fact, it was so popular that it persisted into the Middle Ages and beyond – George Washington had five to seven pints drained from him in just 16 hours in a bid to cure a bad illness. Alas, it didn't work and he died soon after.

© Getty Images

ANIMAL DUNG: WONDER DRUG

Ancient Egypt's cure-all was less than pleasant

EGYPT

From a civilisation that was almost spot on with much of its understanding of the human body and that boasted a great medical system comes a perhaps slightly surprising remedy: animal dung. And it was used a lot.

Crocodile dung was used as birth control in women, and the excrement of other animals apparently had its own healing properties and was able to ward off evil spirits. It turns out there was some method in the madness, though. Research has shown that the microflora in some types of animal faeces does contain some antibiotic substances.

© iStock

RAW VEAL CURES RABIES

The odd remedy for the viral disease

ROME

Being bitten by a wild animal in Ancient Rome wasn't the end of the world according to Pliny the Elder. There were three simple steps you needed to follow. First and foremost, cut the wound open and put raw veal on it. Next, switch to a diet of lime and hog's fat – not the tastiest, but what doesn't kill you makes you stronger, right? Finally, you needed to drink a mixture of wine and boiled badger dung. Somehow, the practice didn't catch on.

POISONS USED AS CURES?

Mercury and arsenic were supposed to make you better

MESOPOTAMIA

Medicine in ancient Mesopotamia was, in some ways, light years ahead of its time. Doctors had their own offices, patients had beds, and medicinal doctors worked alongside religious healers. But there are some aspects of the practice that were questionable. Mercury and arsenic, both known today to be the causes of death in relatively small doses, were mainstream medicines. They were prescribed as drugs, and the same took place in Babylonia and elsewhere, too.

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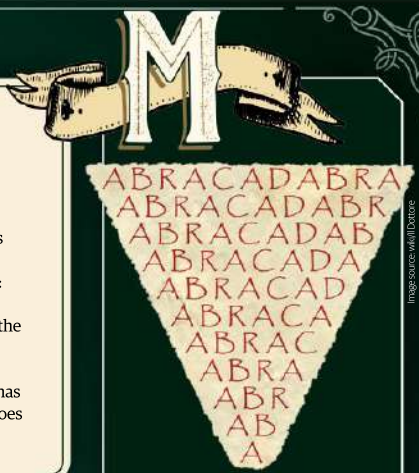

Image source: Wikimedia Commons

MAGIC WORDS WARD OFF MALARIA

All roads lead to abracadabra

ROME

Abracadabra – and the malaria is gone! Today it's known as a word used by magicians with their black and white wands, but in Ancient Rome it was a cure for malaria. In an empire as large as Rome's, malaria was a common killer, so it was important to find a cure, or at least something to ward off the disease. Amulets were created with the word inscribed to keep the wearer safe. The first to wear one was Emperor Caracalla, and he never contracted malaria. While this was probably more coincidence than science, it didn't stop it from becoming a widespread practice that continued into medieval European folklore.

Shakespeare's scoundrels

Elizabethan theatre may be held in high regard today, but its often squalid and popular roots ran deep. Professor Elizabeth Schafer guides us through this fascinating era

Written by Jonathan Gordon

LEFT TO RIGHT William Shakespeare, Ben Jonson, Francis Beaumont, Christopher Marlowe, Thomas Middleton

The name William Shakespeare today is associated with high art and prestige performance. However, in his own time Shakespeare's name, if it were known by many at all, was associated with the lowest order of entertainment. As a playwright, he worked in an industry that sat side by side with bloodsports, brothels, taverns and all sorts of criminality.

"It would be hard to get to The Globe without encountering some aspects of what might be described as the seedier side of life," explains Elizabeth Schafer, professor of drama and theatre studies at Royal Holloway. "That would be hard geographically. It's right next to the bear baiting house so it's hard to go to work, even if you're just doing the laundry for The Globe or collecting the laundry, without encountering that sort of thing."

It's believed that Shakespeare arrived in London around 1588, but by then the playhouses of the capital were already a booming trade. At least nine playhouses were built between 1567 and 1622 in London alone, with plenty more popping up in cities like Bath, Bristol, Norwich and York. Before then players (as actors were referred to at the time) were largely made up of travelling troupes who would set up in the yards of inns or be hired to perform in the halls of wealthy patrons.

EXPERT BIO

PROFESSOR ELIZABETH SCHAFER

Schafer is Professor of Drama and Theatre Studies at Royal Holloway, University of London. She has written extensively on the performance history of Shakespeare's plays and about women directors of Shakespeare's work.

All images © Getty Images

ABOVE Drinking, eating and more frowned-upon pastimes were all tied up with player culture

"The world of professional theatre was really quite new, relatively speaking, in the sense of a theatre that was a permanent place that people went to and paid to see a show," Schafer explains. "Players were considered in the same category as rogues and vagabonds." These travelling bands would wander in and out of towns as strangers, meaning many distrusted their motives. "That's one of the reasons why theatre companies had to have someone in a significant position of power as a patron," says Schafer. Thus we have Leicester's Men and the Lord Chamberlain's Men, acting troupes who carried the name of a respected man at court.

Even so, respectability was still some way from reaching the theatre, even as it was endorsed and enjoyed by some of the most powerful people in the land.

"It was a very undesirable trade in many ways, and in different ways for different people," explains Schafer. "Hardline puritans opposed the theatre profession because it was inherently deceitful. People were very disturbed by the fact that players could convincingly and plausibly impersonate members of the opposite sex and, even more crucially, members of a class above their own."

Fears around impersonation and social mobility may seem a little overblown to modern sensibilities, but they were taken very seriously in the Elizabethan age. There were even laws in place restricting what people could and couldn't wear for this reason. "This was very much tied with the sumptuary laws," says Schafer. "There were laws, rules and regulations about what people could wear in different class positions, as their costumes said everything. There were laws to punish people who dressed in a costume other than that deemed appropriate to their gender and their status. Of course, the exemption from this were the players, who could perform as the opposite sex or in a different class situation. That was very threatening for some people."

Then there was the more practical health concern in an era where plagues and other diseases were both common and hard to treat. "Now, in this time of pandemic, it just seems very, very easy to understand that. Although it was very exciting when players turned up, potentially it was always dangerous," says Schafer. "The playhouses closed in London when the plague numbers got to a certain number each week." And then there was the general level of disturbance a theatre could cause in a neighbourhood, many venues holding up to 3,000 people at a time. "When a playhouse was operating all kinds of people came and it's like living next to a football ground now," Schafer adds. "It's not something you can ignore."

Players were considered in the same category as rogues and vagabonds

It was under these circumstances that the puritan forces in the City of London banned players from within its walls in 1575, forcing new establishments to find space in the suburbs. It was thanks to this that playhouses emerged in Shoreditch to the northeast of the city centre and across the river in Bankside. As it happens, these areas were also the preferred settlements for new immigrant workers from the rest of the kingdom, becoming hotbeds for merchants and new industries looking for workers.

New money in a space outside of the jurisdiction of the City of London led to all sorts of disreputable individuals emerging, from violent criminals to unscrupulous businessmen. A good example of this world is Robert Greene, famous as the first person to make mention of Shakespeare, albeit in a scathing attack on his work in 1592 when he accused him of plagiarism. While a poet and dramatist himself, Greene had abandoned his family and delved deep into the dark life of London, becoming well-acquainted with the brothels, which he wrote about in his work as a pamphleteer. He also took up with a mistress whose brother was a notorious thug who went by the name 'Cutting Ball'.

Inside the playhouse was not necessarily any better. "The playhouse itself was not a particularly respectful environment and certainly the groundlings area [the standing area in front of the stage and the cheapest tickets] would have been quite a challenging space to be in," says

BELOW While duelling was common, it was also illegal and sometimes feuds would require both parties to leave the country to participate

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London's Theatres

Just a few of the key playhouses in the Elizabethan era

The Theatre

Founded: 1576

Sitting just outside of the City walls and therefore outside of its authority, The Theatre was one of the first playhouses to cater to the new theatre crowd. It was built by James Burbage, whose son was a player, and would be the main stage for the Lord Chamberlain's Men from 1594. However, its lease expired in 1597 and it was forced to move.

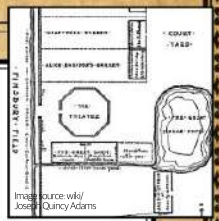


Image source: wiki/ Joseph Quincy Adams

The Curtain

Founded: 1577

When The Theatre was forced to close and move south, The Curtain became the new stage for the Lord Chamberlain's Men, although it had been sitting close by for many years. The Curtain is so named for its location near the curtain wall of St John the Baptist Holywell monastery. Theatres in this time didn't have curtains for their stages as we know them now.

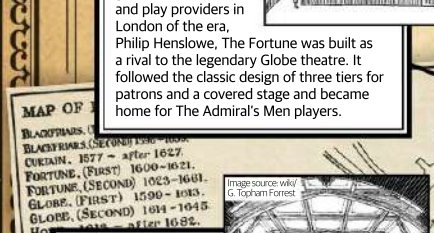
Image source: wiki/Abram Booth

The Fortune

Founded: 1600

Built by one of the great theatre owners and play providers in London of the era, Philip Henslowe, The Fortune was built as a rival to the legendary Globe theatre. It followed the classic design of three tiers for patrons and a covered stage and became home for The Admiral's Men players.

Image source: wiki/1911 Encyclopaedia Britannica



The Blackfriars

Founded: 1576

Originally set up as an indoor playhouse for the children of Chapel Royal, Blackfriars was bought by James Burbage in 1596. There was local uproar, however, and it was leased to a company of boy players (children's troupes were common and popular) before they disbanded and Burbage's son Richard took over with some fellow players.

Image source: wiki/ G. Topham Forrest

The Swan

Founded: 1595

Built by Francis Langley to take on The Rose, The Swan was the largest playhouse in London at the time. Its time was short-lived, however, as a performance of Thomas Nashe and Ben Jonson's *The Isle Of Dogs* caused enough offence to see Jonson and one of the actors arrested. It staged only a few plays afterwards, instead hosting sword fights and bear baiting.

Image source: wiki/Utrecht, University Library

The Rose

Founded: 1587

Another theatre built by Philip Henslowe, this time joining the growing list of establishments that were popping up on Bankside, The Rose was a little smaller than The Globe, holding only 2,000 compared to The Globe's 3,000. It was ultimately demolished in 1606, however, not giving it much time to compete.

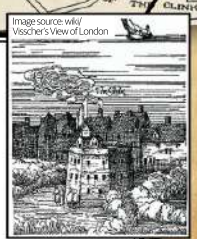


Image source: wiki/ Visscher's View of London

The Globe

Founded: 1599

When The Theatre had to leave Shoreditch it was torn down plank by plank and the timber used to build The Globe on Bankside, which was becoming the new hotspot for entertainment. The Lord Chamberlain's Men not only returned, but some of them also owned and operated the business. Later it became the summer stage for the King's Men.

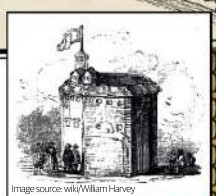


Image source: wiki/William Harvey

Mapping courtesy of Mapseeker

The Impresarios

Two men who helped to shape Elizabethan theatre

Philip Henslowe

c.1550 – 6 January 1616

Probably the most important theatre manager in England in this era, Henslowe made his fortune putting on plays and offering entertainment and diversions around them. He started out with money from his marriage to a wealthy widow and opened up The Rose in 1587 in Southwark. Partnering with his step-son-in-law Edward Alleyn (who was an actor), Henslowe went on to open a number of supporting businesses such as bull and bear baiting. They became so successful in this business that the pair were named Masters of the Royal Game of Bears, Bulls and Mastiff Dogs by James I.

Back in the theatre world he ran the Admiral's Men and was closely associated with the work of Christopher Marlowe, competing with Shakespeare's plays and his Chamberlain's Men. Henslowe even built The Fortune as a direct competitor to The Globe, only in North London instead of in Bankside.

Thanks to his diary, which is really more of a ledger, we have an incredible insight into his business transactions. It also records over 325 plays that he put on between 1592 and 1604, which is one of our best records of the material being performed in London at this time.

James Burbage

c.1530 – 2 February 1597

Burbage worked his way up in the world of plays and players from the very earliest, simplest time of having performances in the yards of inns for the general public. However, he revolutionised the business when he had The Theatre built in Shoreditch (later to be relocated to Bankside and become The Globe). It was the very first of its kind.

His background was actually in carpentry, although at an unknown age he also took up acting and joined the acting company of Robert Dudley, 1st Earl of Leicester. After his work with Dudley, he was the first Englishman to be granted a theatrical licence. It was a bridging moment between the old understanding of acting and the new Elizabethan theatre age.

In building The Theatre, Burbage turned to the classic Roman amphitheatre for inspiration. Such a purpose-built establishment gave actors more room to work as well as space for larger props. Even live cannons might be used in a performance. In the design of the theatre Burbage also sought counsel from Dr John Dee, the famous astronomer, occultist and alchemist, since he had an extensive architectural library to draw upon.

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Schafer. "Prostitutes knew that they had lots of opportunities there and pickpockets knew that they had lots of opportunities there. Some of the cliches of this crowd of people are true."

In fact, when The Swan theatre was being planned the Lord Mayor of London protested its construction, stating it would attract, "thieves, horse-stealers, whoremongers, cozeners, connycatching persons, practicers of treason, and such other like." However, some of the proprietors of the playhouses, like Philip Henslowe, looked to take advantage of these interests too. With the help of celebrated actor and step-son-in-law Edward Alleyn he not only opened The Rose theatre, but also the brothels that sat around it. In fact, the name The Rose itself may have been paying homage to a seedy hotel in the area.

However, the players and playwrights weren't quite so lucky financially. Unlike today where a play might be performed over and over again, multiple times a day for weeks and perhaps months on end, many plays would be lucky to get more than one showing. Audiences demanded new stories each time they attended and playwrights were churning out plays at an incredible rate. What's more, they only got paid for a play once, with nothing for repeat performances.

"Once they had handed a play to the theatre, it wasn't their property any longer so they couldn't really keep making money in the way that the royalty system operates today," Schafer explains. "One of the best sources on this is Philip Henslowe's accounts of what was on at his theatre. Shakespeare was involved in Philip Henslowe's company some of the time and what he records is an awful lot of loans to impoverished playwrights. Very, very few playwrights came out of this well financially. Players possibly earned a living, but I think it was really quite a ramshackle way of earning money because you were always likely to be closed down because of a riot or the plague. If the playhouse is closed you've got no income."

Still, Shakespeare did end up making some money, but it wasn't because he was both a player and a playwright - it was because he was an investor. "He made his money because he was a shareholder," explains Schafer. "That was where the money was, that's where the respectability is and that's where you've got the basis for going home and buying property in Stratford-upon-Avon and getting a coat of arms, and doing all those bourgeois things that he was wanting to do."

Most playwrights and players lived somewhere in between these two worlds, scraping a living from their work while occasionally being invited into the homes of the rich and powerful to perform. They got to pretend to be wealthy themselves, but rarely enjoyed such luxuries off stage. Many would have turned to crime or other side hustles to get by. One famous example is Christopher Marlowe, who did a bit of espionage on the side.

"Francis Walsingham had set up a very effective spy system through the period, not just under Elizabeth I, but also under James VI and I," says Schafer. "It was a very effective system of observing people, particularly potential Catholics. Marlowe seems to have become a double agent and he's off in France at some

LEFT Before the advent of purpose-built theatres, plays would be put on in the yards of inns or anywhere else crowds might gather

stage, and then he behaves erratically." Marlowe's reputation for reckless behaviour and provocative speech has continued to this day. "I wouldn't have wanted to be Christopher Marlowe's handler. I'm not sure that they really recruited the ideal person," says Schafer. "I'm sure he was very brilliant, very inventive, probably had excellent ideas, but I don't think he was reliable. I think spies might do better if they were a bit more reliable."

Most of his rebellious spirit was displayed through his work, however, often challenging traditional views on religion in works like *Tamburlaine* and *Doctor Faustus*, but there was outright violence too. He was connected with the killing of an innkeeper named William Bradley after he had argued with him over a bill. Marlowe's friend Thomas Watson stepped in and stabbed Bradley with his sword in the scuffle. Ultimately Marlowe was accused of being an atheist, sold out by another playwiright named Thomas Kyd (possibly under torture or threat of torture), and killed while under investigation in something of a bar brawl in Deptford. The circumstances of that fight, involving three other spies, remain mysterious and while it was said to be over a bill, theories continue around it being an assassination or even Marlowe faking his death to avoid punishment for his alleged crimes.

Perhaps even more dangerous to know was Ben Jonson, another writer and contemporary of Shakespeare and Marlowe who also claimed to have been a mercenary employed to fight against the Spanish in Flanders. "Ben Jonson was a very abrasive character, so he got into trouble where other people probably wouldn't have gotten into trouble," Schafer explains. "He only got away with murder by being branded instead of being executed because he could recite his neck verse." This incident came after Jonson killed a player named Gabriel Spenser in a duel, when duelling was prohibited and punishable by death. Jonson narrowly avoided the noose for his crime by claiming the Benefit of the Clergy, an old law that stated that if a man can recite a passage from the *Bible* he should be considered a priest and handed to the bishop for punishment. He was ultimately branded on his thumb for his crime as a marker to show he could not appeal for clemency in such a way again. That same year, however, his play *Every Man In His Humour* was performed by the Lord Chamberlain's theatrical company, establishing his reputation as a playwright.

That being said, murder and manslaughter weren't the only ways a playwright could find themselves on the wrong side of the law – their writing could do that just as easily.

"The plays had to be passed by the Lord Chamberlain, who acted as the approval board for new plays," Schafer explains. "There were a whole load of things that you could not write about and still hope to get approval from the Lord Chamberlain. If you somehow circumvented that you risked prison and you risked being branded. Ben Jonson was also in trouble for his contributions to *Eastward Ho*, which was satirical and was making very rude jokes about people from Scotland when they've only just got a new king from Scotland."

Even Shakespeare got in trouble for putting on plays that were deemed to be inflammatory. "Shakespeare's company got into a lot of trouble for playing *Richard II* just before the Earl of Essex's rebellion, because there was this idea, which was probably true, that they were trying to rev people up," Schafer reveals. And perhaps the most popular play of the era was actually an illegal one.

> *Shakespeare's company got into a lot of trouble for playing Richard II just before the Earl of Essex's rebellion*

"The biggest play of the entire period was Thomas Middleton's *A Game At Chess*, which you could never stage now because it would be meaningless to anyone," Schafer explains. "It was a great cause celebre and it ran for nine days, at a time when no play ever ran for nine days. It only stopped because the king, who was in Oxford, heard what was happening and sent in the heavies and closed it. That was a play that was totally illegal, had not been passed by the Lord Chamberlain and the censor, and was making fun of the king and the royal family and the royal family of Spain and the Spanish ambassador. So it was very shocking, very political, very illegal and that's why it was popular."

So this was the real world of Shakespeare and his contemporaries, writing and performing alongside bear baiting pits, pushing the boundaries of acceptability, engaging in reckless and often drunken behaviour. They were rascals and vagabonds, but they ultimately left behind a legacy of incredible works, a legacy which represents only a small fraction of the material that they produced in their time.

BELOW Bankside became a massive entertainment area, evidenced by The Theatre being torn down and relocated there as The Globe

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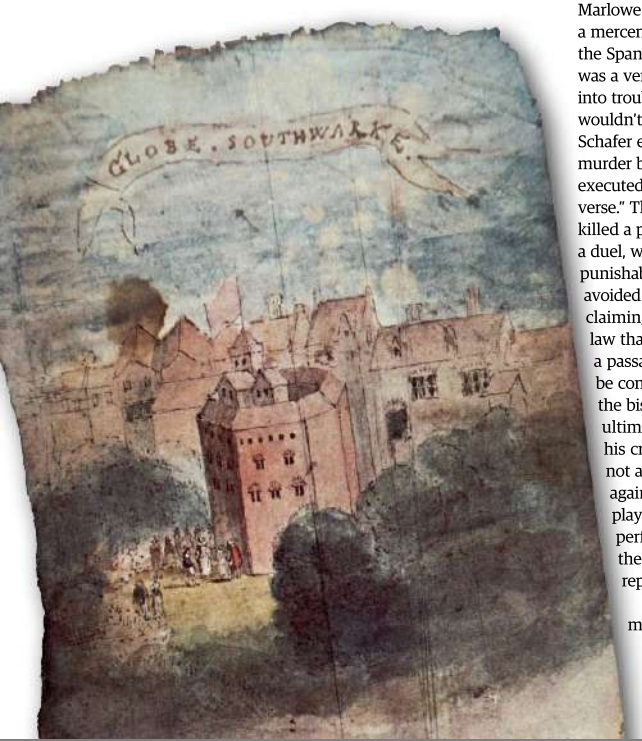

Triumph and Tragedy

From the trials of his childhood to his military service, we remember the early years of Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh

Written by Tom Garner

Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh, was one of the most recognisable men in the world. As the husband of Queen Elizabeth II, he represented the British monarchy for almost 70 years and was the longest-serving consort of a reigning British monarch until his recent passing on 9 April 2021. Along with the queen, he did much to represent the royal family as an unchanging institution in a world that has changed almost beyond recognition since Elizabeth succeeded to the throne in 1952. However, on Philip's part this security was in deep contrast to his early life, which was formed by war, neglect, tragedy and dogged endurance. In many ways his long, successful marriage and subsequent family compensated for the trials of his youth.

Philip was born on 10 June 1921 on the Greek island of Corfu at Mons Repos, the only son of Prince Andrew of Greece and Denmark and Princess Alice of Battenberg who already had four daughters: Cecilie, Sophie, Margarita and Theodora. Philip was born as Prince of Greece and Denmark. This dual title was reflected in his name. He was christened 'Philippos' but he belonged to the Danish-German House of Schleswig-Holstein-Sonderburg-Glücksburg. To add to the confusion Philip was not a British subject at birth but did have family ties to England through Prince Louis of Battenberg, who later took the name Mountbatten. Nevertheless, his wider European connections would soon come in very handy for Philip as he was born during a turbulent time for Greece, and his stay in the country of his birth would not last long.

The 11 September 1922 Revolution was a revolt of the Greek armed forces against the government. It led to the downfall of the Greek monarchy and the abdication of King Constantine. Prince Philip, who was still a baby, was reputedly carried out to a ship in a makeshift cot made out of an orange box. For the infant child it was the start of decades of stateless wandering. From 3 December 1922 until the late 1940s, he had no permanent residence.

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BELOW
Philip's marriage to Princess Elizabeth in November 1947 gave him a domestic stability that he had never known

In 1928 Philip went to Britain for the first time to attend Cheam School. By this stage Philip's family life was already beginning to collapse. His mother Alice, who had been born deaf, was on the verge of a nervous breakdown. She was placed in a Swiss sanatorium in 1931. In the aftermath the British part of Philip's family took a large part of responsibility for his care. George, Marquis of Milford Haven, became Philip's guardian for the next seven years and became a surrogate father to him.

Despite Philip's achievements at school, he was very isolated. In the five years that he attended Gordonstoun neither George Milford Haven nor Philip's other British guardian Lord Louis Mountbatten visited him. Towards the end of his time at Gordonstoun, Philip was hit by a family tragedy. On 19 November 1937 his pregnant sister Cecilie was killed in plane crash in Belgium along with her husband, two children and unborn child. Philip travelled alone to attend the funerals in Germany. It was a tragically strange occasion. Nazi officials surrounded the funeral parties but it was also the first time that Philip's parents had seen each other and their surviving children for years.

The next year, 1938, brought new purpose to Philip's life in more ways than one. Under the advice of his father

and Lord Mountbatten, Philip decided to join the Royal Navy and enrolled at the Britannia Royal Naval College at Dartmouth. In July 1939, Philip was put in charge of entertaining his distant cousins, 13-year-old Princess Elizabeth and her younger sister Margaret, when they visited the college. They had met in 1934 and in 1937 at George VI's coronation but on this occasion Elizabeth fell for Philip. Over the next few years they would write letters to each other but for the moment there were other priorities. There was a war to be fought.

Philip's war service began when he was posted to HMS Ramillies in Ceylon in January 1940. At the Battle of Cape Matapan off the Greek coast in March 1941, Philip served as a midshipman on HMS Valiant, where he was in charge of operating the ship's searchlight to pick out ships during the night. It was Italy's greatest naval defeat and Philip was mentioned in dispatches for his courage and awarded the Greek Cross of Valour. The next year, at the age of 21, Philip was promoted to become one of the youngest first lieutenants in the navy and in July 1943 he was once again in action, this time aboard HMS Wallace taking part in the Allied invasion of Sicily.

Philip ended his war aboard HMS Whelp, which was one of the ships that took part in the surrender of Japanese forces on 2 September 1945. He had kept in touch with Elizabeth and in 1946 he proposed. Philip formally asked George VI for permission to marry Elizabeth and the king agreed on the proviso that he wait for an official engagement until Elizabeth turned 21 in April 1947. Philip threw himself into becoming a British subject: he renounced his Greek and Danish titles, converted from Greek Orthodoxy to Anglicanism and took his mother's maiden name, Mountbatten.

Philip's destiny was confirmed in November 1947 when he married Elizabeth in Westminster Abbey. George VI gave him the titles of Duke of Edinburgh, Earl of Merioneth and Baron Greenwich as well as the style His Royal Highness. Philip now had purpose and a surname, but more importantly, he attained a permanent home and love. His devotion to Elizabeth was expressed in a letter to his mother: "Cherish Lilibet? I wonder if that word is enough to express what is in me." Alice was the only member of his immediate family to attend the wedding.

"Philip was mentioned in dispatches for his courage and awarded the Greek Cross of Valour"

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Greatest Battles

BATTLE OF ZENTA

SANJAK OF SEGEDIN, 11 SEPTEMBER 1697

Written by William E Welsh

Shortly after dawn on 11 September 1697 a high-ranking Ottoman prisoner named Cafar Pasha was brought before Prince Eugene of Savoy, the commander-in-chief of the Hapsburg Imperial army. The prince declared that if Pasha did not immediately divulge the location of Sultan Mustafa II's army, a group of Croatians standing nearby would hack him to pieces.

Desperate to save his own life, the prisoner began sharing everything he knew. He told the prince that the sultan's army was in the process of crossing the Tisza River just below the village of Zenta. The bulk of the cavalry and the sultan's baggage train had already crossed to the far side of the river, but the foot soldiers had not yet made their way to the east side – leaving them vulnerable to attack.

Prince Eugene directs his cavalry to exploit weaknesses in the Ottoman defences

The Hapsburg infantry's disciplined musketry vanquished the sultan's janissaries at Zenta

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Eugene knew that he had to act quickly to take advantage of the favourable situation. The information gleaned from the Ottoman officer presented him with a golden opportunity to destroy the Ottoman forces and break the stalemate in the Great Turkish War.

THE LONG WARS

Sultan Suleiman the Magnificent's victory over Hungarian King Louis II at the Battle of Mohacs in 1526 had led to the Ottoman annexation of two-thirds of Hungary. The remainder of the country, a buffer strip in the north known as Royal Hungary, remained in the hands of the Hapsburgs. Because Louis, who died fleeing the field, had no successor, the Hapsburgs inherited Hungarian dynastic claims. For three centuries, beginning in the mid-15th century until the 18th century, the Austrian Hapsburgs held the throne of the Holy Roman Empire in an unbroken line of succession. Because the archduke of Austria was also the emperor, he could harness the military resources of the empire for his regional war against the Ottomans.

Although the Hapsburgs and Ottomans skirmished repeatedly along their frontier after the collapse of the Kingdom of Hungary in 1526, they fought two 'long wars' that were characterised by particularly bloody sieges and battles. The first long war, known simply as the Long Turkish War, lasted from 1593 to 1606 and was mostly one-sided in favour of the Ottomans. Conversely, the Hapsburgs dominated the second long war, known as the Great Turkish War, which lasted from 1683 to 1699.

The second long war began when Grand Vizier Kara Mustafa Pasha's Ottoman army besieged Vienna on 14 July 1683. The garrison held the Turks at bay for nearly two months. On 12 September, a Polish-Imperial army led by Polish King Jan Sobieski launched a stunning attack from the Kahlenberg Heights overlooking the city. Sobieski's Polish winged hussars, backed by an Imperial army led by Duke Charles of Lorraine, overran the Ottomans, and the survivors withdrew to Ottoman Hungary.

RECONQUEST OF HUNGARY

The great victory that the Polish-Imperial army obtained at Vienna in 1683 was the first of a half-dozen decisive victories the Hapsburgs would enjoy during the Great Turkish War. The following year

Pope Innocent XI sponsored a Holy League whose primary participants were Hapsburg Austria, the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, Venice and the Papacy. Each member of the alliance agreed not to make a separate peace with the Ottomans.

The armies of the time typically campaigned from roughly May to October and spent the winter in a fortified area. The Ottoman army usually wintered in Erdine or Istanbul. Since it took them one or two months to reach the front with their slow-moving supply train, the campaign season often did not begin until August.

Charles of Lorraine followed up the Hapsburg victory at Vienna with the successful 78-day siege of Buda in 1686. He sustained the momentum of his counteroffensive with a decisive victory over the Ottomans in a pitched battle in 1687, at Harkany, southern Hungary. During this exchange the fury of the Ottoman janissaries proved to be no match for their opponents' concentrated musket fire.

By this point in time, the Hapsburgs had conquered much of Hungary and had reversed many of the gains in the country made by Suleiman the Great. The Ottomans found themselves defending the Sava-Danube line, with Belgrade serving as their forward base. Lorraine's successor, Max Emmanuel, Elector of Bavaria, succeeded in capturing the fortresses of Peterwardein and Belgrade in 1688.

BATTLE OF SLANKAMEN

When the Holy Roman Empire joined the coalition against France in the Nine Years' War it afforded the Ottomans a chance to regroup and resume the offensive in Hungary. Emperor Leopold sent his best commanders (Charles of Lorraine, Ludwig of Bavaria and Prince Eugene) and the bulk of his troops to fight the French, and this gave the Ottomans an opportunity to regain ground in Serbia, Hungary and Transylvania. Grand Vizier Fazil Mustafa Pasha retook Belgrade in October 1690 after a brief siege.

Yet the grand vizier's luck ran out on 19 August 1691 when he attacked Margrave Louis of Baden's Imperial army 64km north of Belgrade on the right bank of the Danube River at Slankamen. Successive waves of Ottoman troops charged the Hapsburg position, but every charge was shattered by the Imperial infantry's disciplined musketry. When Mustafa Pasha died leading a last desperate charge, his army panicked and fled the field.

FRONTIER CLASHES

Sultan Mustafa II took the Ottoman throne in February 1695 following the death of Sultan Ahmed II. The 30-year-old Mustafa possessed many good traits. He was energetic, zealous and eager to learn the art of war. He believed wholeheartedly that the sultan's place was at the head of an army of conquest, yet he lacked military experience and was often indecisive. Shortly after Ahmed's death, the fiery young sultan issued an imperial writ in which he sought to inspire an army demoralised by recent defeats at the hands of the Hapsburgs. Simply put, he stated that he intended to lead his armies in person against the Hapsburg forces like his famous forebear Suleiman the Magnificent.

Prince Eugene of Savoy

Mustafa and Grand Vizier Elmas Mehmed Pasha led the Ottoman army north from Erdine on 1 July, arriving in Belgrade little over a month later. The situation in Serbia had reached a stalemate, with the Austrians heavily garrisoning Peterwardein and the Ottomans doing the same in Belgrade.

Mustafa therefore decided to roll back Hapsburg gains in Transylvania. Their first objective was the fortress of Lipova in southern Transylvania, which the Austrians were using as a forward base for operations against the key Ottoman supply base at Temesvar.

The following year an Imperial army led by Augustus II, Elector of Saxony, besieged Temesvar. Mustafa marched to its relief, forcing Augustus to raise his siege and withdraw north.

EUGENE TAKES COMMAND

At the outbreak of the Great Turkish War, 19-year-old Prince Eugene had arrived in Austria eager to fight with the Imperial army. He received an appointment as lieutenant in the Kufstein Dragoons, a regiment in Charles of Lorraine's army, during the relief of Vienna. Afterwards, the emperor awarded him for his valour by giving him command of the regiment. Eugene served for the next six years on the Hungarian front, where he was able to observe firsthand the successful generalship of both Charles of Lorraine and Louis of Baden. After a brief stint on the Rhineland at the outset of the Nine Years' War, he received a transfer to northern Italy.

Eugene fought with great distinction on the Italian front during the Nine Years' War and received a promotion to field marshal in 1693. Four years later, Leopold appointed Eugene to serve as the commander-in- chief of the Imperial forces on the Hungarian front. When Eugene arrived in Peterwardein in July 1697, the young field marshal set about improving the condition of the 30,000 Austria, Brandenburg, and Saxon troops assembled at the fortress. He sent a request to the emperor for reinforcements, rations, ammunition and equipment. Leopold directed his quartermasters that Eugene should receive the provisions and equipment he had requested. Since the Nine Years' War had ended, Leopold also was able to send Eugene 20,000 additional troops.

Hapsburg troops captured many Ottoman standards as they drove the rearguard of Sultan Mustafa's army into the Tisza

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If Eugene should decide to give battle, he should only do so if he was certain of victory, Leopold told him. Eugene had learned a great deal about the art of war in his 14 years of active service in the Imperial army. He hoped for an opportunity to strike the larger Ottoman army when it was vulnerable. Although Mustafa might have more men, Eugene had every confidence that he could outfight him.

ROAD TO BATTLE

In his third campaign season, Sultan Mustafa departed Erdine with 80,000 troops, arriving in Belgrade on 10 August 1697. His senior military advisors disagreed over the best strategy for the campaign season. Amcazade Huseyin Pasha, the commander of the Belgrade fortress, argued in favour of a northward advance against Peterwardein; Grand Vizier Elmas Mehmed Pasha argued in favour of a march to Temesvar because he believed that Peterwardein was too strong to capture.

After careful consideration, the sultan opted for a march to Temesvar. What he planned to do once he reached that destination, though, is uncertain. Mustafa led his army north from Belgrade on

> "Sultan Mustafa II lacked military experience and was often indecisive"

18 August. The army crossed the Danube, then made a detour west to capture Titel Castle. It then marched north along the right bank of the Tisza, reaching the vicinity of the village of Zenta, which was situated 129km north of Belgrade, on the morning of 11 September.

Ottoman scouts had no idea of the location of the Imperial army. Mustafa ordered his engineers to build a bridge across the river south of the village. Once it was in place, he ordered his cavalry and artillery to cross to the left bank. Aware that his janissaries on the right bank would need to protect themselves against an attack, he ordered them to entrench. They hastily constructed field works and maintained a vigilant watch for the enemy as the mounted troops and gun crews streamed across the narrow bridge of boats.

SLAUGHTER AT THE RIVERBANK

When he learned that the Ottoman army had crossed to the north side of the Danube, Eugene assembled his army and set off to shadow his opponent. The task of tracking the enemy column fell to the Imperial hussars, who soon furnished Eugene with a prisoner to interrogate. Eugene acted immediately on the information extracted from him.

The prince led his cavalry towards Zenta and ordered his infantry commanders to conduct a

IMPERIAL ARMY

Image source: wiki/Het Geheugen

PRINCE EUGENE OF SAVOY

Raised in France during the reign of Louis XIV, Eugene would end up holding high state positions in the Imperial court of Vienna, serving Leopold I, Joseph I and Charles VI as a loyal servant of the Holy Roman Empire. As his health faltered in old age he remained a skilful diplomat.

Image source: wiki/Belvedere

GUIDO VON STARHEMBERG

An Austrian military officer, the count of Starhemberg had been an aide-de-camp to his cousin Ernst Rüdiger von Starhemberg during the siege of Vienna in 1683. After the wars with the Ottomans he went on to fight in the War of Spanish Succession.

Image source: wiki/Österreichische Nationalbibliothek

SIGBERT HEISTER

By the Battle of Zenta, Sigbert had been fighting the Ottomans for over 30 years and was in his 50s as he took them on once again as commander under Prince Eugene. He went on to lead troops in the War of Spanish Succession and Rákóczi's War of Independence.

OTTOMAN ARMY

Image source: wiki/Leipzig Photo

SULTAN MUSTAFA II

When Mustafa II began his reign, the Great Turkish War had been raging for over a decade and he was determined to reclaim territory that had been lost. The defeat at Zenta and death of Grand Vizier Elmas Mehmed Pasha were huge blows to his hopes as the empire receded.

Image source: wiki/coolcoffee.hu

EMERIC THÖKÖLY

Though a Hungarian nobleman, Emeric was the leader of anti-Hapsburg uprisings and prince of the Ottoman vassal state Upper Hungary. He led Ottoman cavalry at the Battle of Zenta. He lost his principality and retired to an estate near Constantinople.

forced march to the enemy's location. The field marshal and the cavalry arrived at the assembly point at mid-afternoon; however, the infantry did not reach Zenta until 6pm. This left Eugene two hours of daylight to inflict as much damage on the Turks as possible.

The Hapsburg field marshal deployed his troops in a half-moon formation before the arc of the enemy's trenches. He placed his cavalry on both wings and his infantry in the centre. Eugene had complete confidence in the ability of his army to defeat the enemy. Imperialist musketeers had proven that their fire discipline was superior to that of the Ottoman Janissary corps. As for the Imperial cavalry, the prince could rely both on the firepower of his carbine-armed dragoons and the shock charge of his armoured cuirassiers.

Loud drums and blaring trumpets sounded the Imperial advance, and the Hapsburg line surged forward. The flanks of the Imperial army, which were anchored on the river, overlapped the entire position occupied by the entrenched janissaries.

Once the Imperialist line advanced, Mustafa directed sipahi cavalry on the far bank to recross the river and assist the infantry. Yet the narrowness of the bridge meant that only a small number could cross at a time.

A FRIGHTFUL BLOODBATH

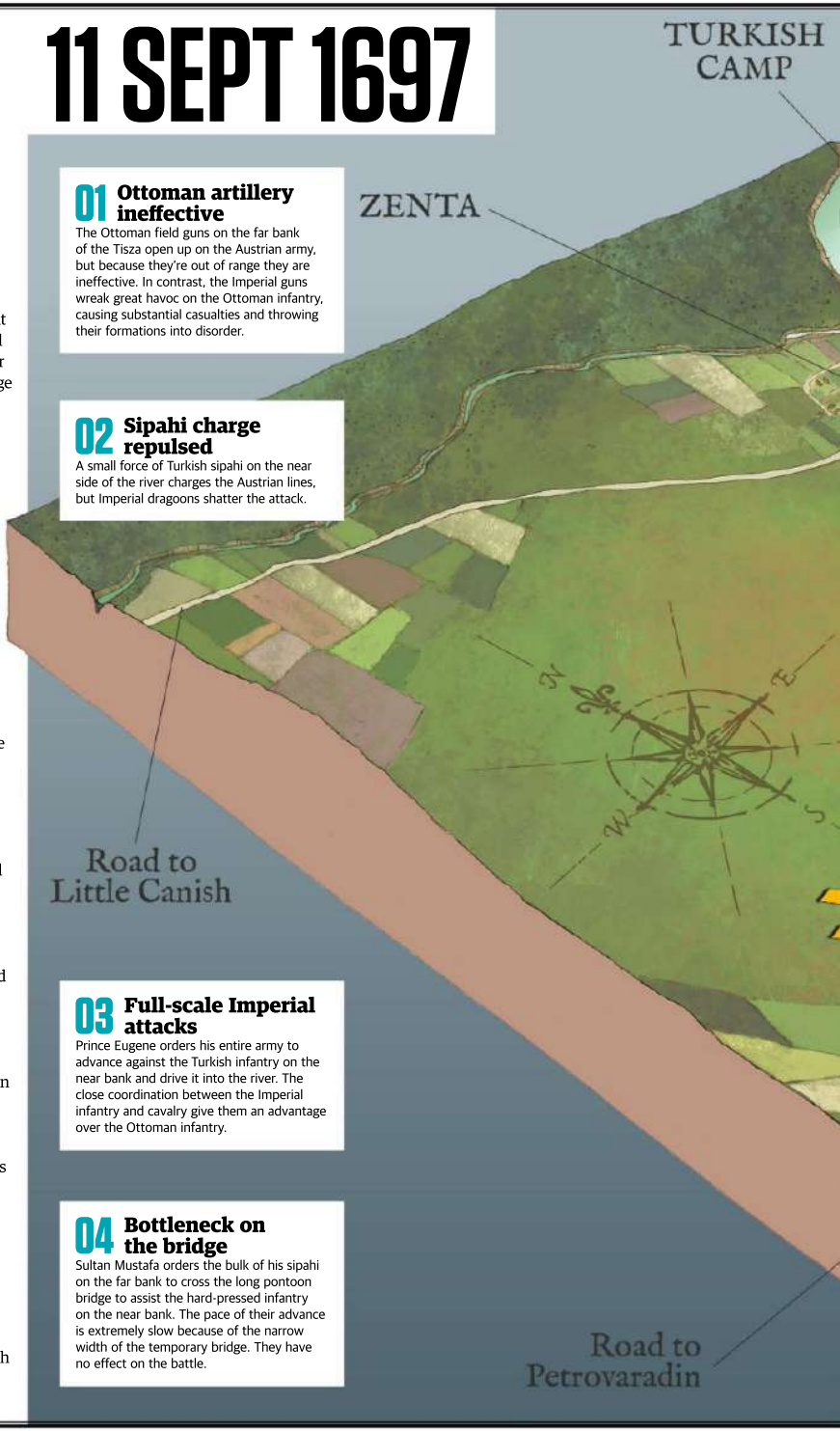
As the battle grew in intensity, the Ottoman line began to weaken in places. Mehmed Pasha, who was stationed with the janissaries, directed the defence for a time, but he was eventually slain. The janissaries, who were armed with both bows and muskets, fought with great courage, but they were mowed down by the relentless volleys of fire from the Imperial musketeers. As gaps opened up in the enemy lines, Eugene directed his cuirassiers to exploit them. A group of cuirassiers also succeeded in working their way around the Ottoman right flank to assail the Turks from behind.

Blown to pieces by the musketry and artillery, the Turkish bodies were piled high inside the Ottoman perimeter. As the last resistance crumbled at nightfall, the Imperial troops moved through the piles of wounded and dying, determined to annihilate any pockets of resistance.

When it was all over, 20,000 Turks lay dead inside their perimeter, and 10,000 more drowned in the river. Imperial losses were light in comparison. In addition to the grand vizier, four other viziers perished in the short but bloody battle. Mustafa escaped to Temesvar, while Eugene followed up his victory by raiding deep into Serbia.

Not long afterward Mustafa asked the English to mediate a peace agreement. The English, who were assisted by the Dutch, helped the Hapsburgs and Ottomans come to terms. Through the Treaty of Karlowitz of 1699, the Hapsburgs recovered all of Hungary (except for the province of Temesvar), Croatia and Transylvania. The Ottoman Empire kept the lands south of the Sava-Danube line, which amounted to most of Serbia, including Belgrade.

11 SEPT 1697


TURKISH CAMP
ZENTA
01 Ottoman artillery ineffective
The Ottoman field guns on the far bank of the Tisza open up on the Austrian army, but because they're out of range they are ineffective. In contrast, the Imperial guns wreak great havoc on the Ottoman infantry, causing substantial casualties and throwing their formations into disorder.
02 Sipahi charge repulsed
A small force of Turkish sipahi on the near side of the river charges the Austrian lines, but Imperial dragoons shatter the attack.
Road to Little Canish
03 Full-scale Imperial attacks
Prince Eugene orders his entire army to advance against the Turkish infantry on the near bank and drive it into the river. The close coordination between the Imperial infantry and cavalry give them an advantage over the Ottoman infantry.
04 Bottleneck on the bridge
Sultan Mustafa orders the bulk of his sipahi on the far bank to cross the long pontoon bridge to assist the hard-pressed infantry on the near bank. The pace of their advance is extremely slow because of the narrow width of the temporary bridge. They have no effect on the battle.
Road to Petrovaradin

05 Disciplined musketry
Imperial musketeers shatter Ottoman formations. Eugene directs his cuirassiers to exploit weak spots in the Ottoman perimeter. The black-breasted cuirassiers hack and slash their way into the Ottoman perimeter, where they cause havoc.

06 Cuirassiers outflank janissaries
At Eugene's direction, a portion of the cuirassiers on his left wing splashes through the shallows to an island near the shoreline, ride south on the island, and then recross to the shore in order to get behind the janissaries. The plan works perfectly and the janissaries find themselves assailed from front and rear.

07 Slaughter on the riverbank
The Imperial musketeers cut down the remaining Ottoman janissaries bunched up along the river bank. Thousands of Turkish foot soldiers plunge into the Tisza River hoping to swim to safety. Most of them drown.

08 Sultan abandons crippled army
Sultan Mustafa orders troops on the left bank to guard the bridge to prevent the Imperialists repairing it and crossing, but fearing for their lives they hide in the marshes. The sultan and his bodyguards flee on horseback for the safety of Temesvar, taking with them the sacred standard and the mantle of the Prophet.

Map by Rocio Espin

What If...

NAPOLEON HAD WON AT TRAFALGAR?

Nelson's victory saved Britain from the threat of invasion, but could the British have lost the 1805 naval battle?

Interview by Callum McKelvie

INTERVIEW WITH

© University of Westminster

RICHARD HARDING

Professor Richard Harding is an expert in naval history and amphibious warfare and previously edited the academic journal, *The Mariner's Mirror*. Among his numerous books are *Modern Naval History: Debates and Prospects* and *Seapower and Naval Warfare: 1650-1830*.

On 21 October 1805, the naval forces of Napoleon Bonaparte and his Spanish allies faced the Royal Navy, commanded by Admiral Lord Nelson, off the coast of Trafalgar, Spain. For five hours the battle raged but the British forces were able to annihilate the enemy, destroying 19 ships. However, 1,500 British seamen lost their lives, with Nelson among them. Having been shot by a sniper in the shoulder and chest, he died when victory was imminent. The Battle of Trafalgar has become the stuff of legend, with Nelson immortalised as the man who saved Britain from invasion. Yet what if Napoleon had won on that fateful day?

What is some of the wider context leading up to Trafalgar?

Napoleon thought he would be able to trick the British and move them out of position, leaving the English Channel open. Napoleon's plan was to draw the British to the West Indies, then hopefully the French Commander Villeneuve would be able to go up the Channel and control a landing on the coast. That was never going to happen, though, because the British Channel fleet never moved. The British were well aware of this plan and everything they did was geared towards continuing to consolidate control of the Channel. I think Napoleon thought that he could threaten Britain with an invasion and pressure them into some kind of treaty. On the other side of the coin, Britain couldn't win the war with just its navy, though it could certainly defend itself. What Britain needed was allies, and they created an alliance with Russia, Sweden and Austria that would force Napoleon that way. The intention was to keep both the Baltic and the Mediterranean open, because Britain was earning vast sums of money from trade in those areas.

What were the key factors in the Battle of Trafalgar?

The battle was a very unequal struggle, despite the number of ships broadly being the same. When Napoleon finally got the Spanish to join with France, declaring war on Britain in October 1804, there were another 28 Spanish ships which could now support the 34 French ones. Another factor is Villeneuve himself. He was from an old family and of good standing, but by this point he was totally demoralised. He had survived the Battle of the Nile and knew what Nelson was capable of doing – Nelson's intention was annihilation. Napoleon was also losing faith in Villeneuve and he knew this. So what we've got in terms of key factors is a French fleet heading out to sea heading to the Mediterranean, with a commander that is thoroughly depressed. On the other side we've

© Getty Images

RIGHT
John Christian Schetky's painting of the battle

Main image sources: © Alamy, © Getty Images

FIRST

THE PAST

1789-99

THE RISE OF NAPOLEON

Napoleon Bonaparte had made his name as a young officer during the French Revolution. On 5 October 1795 he was instrumental in stopping Royalist rebels who were marching on the National Convention, saving the Republic. Appointed commander in chief of the army in Italy, he oversaw numerous victories and organised the Treaty of Campo Formio with Austria. In 1799 he organised a coup détat, seized control and proclaimed himself the emperor of France.

1777-98

WHO WAS HORATIO NELSON?

By the time he was commanding the British forces at Trafalgar, Nelson had already established himself as a top naval commander. In 1777 he had become a lieutenant and had fought in the American Revolutionary wars. After an unsuccessful stint commanding a frigate and enforcing the Navigation Act against American ships he was without another appointment for five years, when he then fought the Revolutionary French in the Mediterranean. His victory at the Battle of Cape St Vincent in 1797 won Nelson a knighthood and a promotion to rear admiral. Another victory, at the Battle of the Nile, saw Nelson all but annihilate the French forces.

© Alamy

1805-6

VILLENEUVE'S CAPTURE AND DEATH

Born into a noble and established family, Pierre-Charles Villeneuve received rapid promotion upon entering the French Navy. It was his flagship, along with one other, which were the only two to escape destruction at the hands of Nelson during the Battle of the Nile. Following defeat at Trafalgar, Villeneuve was captured but released shortly after, whereupon he returned to France in disgrace. Shortly after arriving and aware that Napoleon would be severely displeased with the defeat at Trafalgar, Villeneuve committed suicide. Stabbing himself six times in the chest, this caused some to speculate he'd in fact been murdered.

© Alamy

ABOVE An artist's impression of the scene aboard the French ship Algésiras during the battle

got a British fleet that knew exactly what it was doing at this point and was determined that this would be a battle of annihilation. The strongest navy was the combined fleet with about 33 ships, as opposed to the Royal Navy's 27, but the quality of the command and the quality of support was far different.

What were some of the immediate results of the battle?

It ended Napoleon's hopes of contesting the seas. It meant that he didn't have the capacity to be really disruptive in trying to attack the British colonies, either in the West Indies or in the East Indies. It didn't save Britain from the threat of invasion but it did ensure the security of British maritime communications and also secured British access to markets in the Mediterranean. Despite Napoleon's actions, most of Europe still wanted British goods. Due to their victory the British were able to import goods into Europe from the Mediterranean and the Baltic. However it did not have the dramatic impact of saving Britain from invasion, which I think is the crucial thing. The 19th and 20th century British narrative is that all that stood between Britain and the Napoleonic invasion was Nelson and a few ships, which simply wasn't the case.

Are there any instances where the combined fleet could have won?

Put simply, no. The French and Spanish performed a single line and Nelson had split his own line into two. Recently, during the Bicentenary, the battle was modelled on a computer and it was quite clear that what Nelson did as he approached the French and Spanish was to move as if he was going to attack further to the front of the French line. This caused Villeneuve to push his own line further out, so they couldn't support the two parts of the line which were cut. It was a pretty one-sided event. I can't see where during the battle that Villeneuve could have actually won.

What if the British government had not concluded the treaty of the Third Coalition with Austria in August 1805? Might that have meant Napoleon's Grand Armee was still on the Channel coast by the time a critical battle at sea occurred?

What strikes me about this whole affair was the importance of Britain negotiating the Third Coalition in getting Sweden and Russia on board, and by August involving Austria too. Once that happened Napoleon gave up any idea of invading Britain. He had to move his army to the east in order to confront the Austrians. If that hadn't happened, then the army would still have been on the Channel coast. Whether, despite that defeat, Napoleon would have tried to find other means is an interesting question. Again, though, highly difficult because you only have small ships to cross the channel in. He needed a long period of good weather and he needed to keep his communications open for probably six weeks. If the British hadn't concluded that treaty then it's possible that the French might have found some kind

of way to get across the Channel but it would have been a very small chance.

What if Villeneuve had been more aggressive in his approach to the Battle of Trafalgar?
This is a great point for French historians. Before Villeneuve was put in command there was an admiral called La Touche-Tréville and he had previously beaten Nelson. He was a different kettle of fish to Villeneuve, and he would also have stood up to Napoleon when he was making impossible demands. It's likely he would have also worked better with the Spanish as well, because the Spanish fleet was in relatively good condition and its officers were extremely good. Essentially you would have a far better naval commander, far stronger in terms of his relationships with his Spanish collaborators, and someone who would've stood up to Napoleon. That's one of the great questions surrounding the battle: what if someone who had fought Nelson and beaten him had been in command? The whole campaign would have been very different.

Could it have led to an invasion of England? And were there any plans in place?
There was a whole series of plans, dating right back to revolutionary times, and Napoleon had a number of his own. But could a victory for him at Trafalgar have led to an invasion? It would have been extremely unlikely. Even if Britain had been defeated, the French and Spanish would've had to go on fighting their way up the Channel, defeating equally large forces with a reducing number of ships. I think I'm right in saying that Napoleon had estimated that he needed about 138,000 troops to capture London, and he only ever had the capacity to land 90,000. It's unlikely that one defeat of the British off the coast of southern Spain would have led to an invasion, but there were plans.

If Napoleon had won, what could some of the immediate consequences have been?
It would have put more pressure upon the British expedition to Southern Italy. Prior to the Battle of Trafalgar the British had sent a force to the Kingdom of Naples, with Russian support. As it happened, British attempts to stop the French invasion in Naples failed anyway, but it would have made it much more complicated.

Could a French victory at Trafalgar have had a wider historical impact?
If it had been a victory it would have put the seal on Napoleon's reputation as a strategic genius. If the Royal Navy had been thrown out of its position we would have a different view of Napoleon. In France, Napoleon's reputation as a land commander is almost second to none, but to me it was his ineptitude in many ways of understanding the sea that let him down. I think we would also have a different world in some respects because Britain would have become part of the Napoleonic empire, even if it were through giving up its colonial possessions. The British had taken numerous French colonies and it's likely that the French would have insisted that they took those back. So it was a big ask for a victory to take place, but it would have had a massive historical impact.

© Getty Images

BELOW
The death of Nelson, who became immortalised as a British hero

THE POSSIBILITY

1805

INVASION?

While Napoleon was in exile on St Helena towards the end of his life, he noted to his doctor, Barry O'Meara, that: "It was my firm intention to invade England and to head the expedition myself." Napoleon then outlined his plan of drawing off the Royal Navy, then sail up the Channel and land an army that would march on and seize the capital. O'Meara described how the two became involved in a debate as to the viability of such a plan and whether the British population would not have resisted and taken to the streets to defend the city. However, interestingly, Napoleon claimed that during the proposed march on London he would have exercised the most extreme discipline towards his troops and that he would have come to Britain as a 'friend' of the people. He said: "Marauding or otherwise injuring or insulting the inhabitants would have been punished with instant death."

1803

LA TOUCHE-TRÉVILLE

In 1803, Admiral Louis-René de La Touche-Tréville had successfully managed to hold back the forces of Nelson while at Boulogne. In 1804, while off Toulon, La Touche-Tréville intercepted Nelson as he was on the way to capture two French vessels. Nelson turned back, followed by La Touche-Tréville, who then used the event to publicly humiliate the British admiral. For Nelson's part, this began a bitter rivalry and he insulted his adversary numerous times. For La Touche-Tréville, he spoke of a desire to "have another confrontation with his colleague, Nelson". La Touche-Tréville died in 1804 but had he lived to see Trafalgar it may have been he, and not Villeneuve, who commanded the French/Spanish forces. If so, it would have been the final titanic duel between two rivals.

Image source: wiki/ Palace of Versailles

Through History

CHURCH CURIOSITIES

Discover some odd artefacts and weird legends in British churches

David Castleton, author of *Church Curiosities: Strange Objects and Bizarre Legends*, is always on the lookout for the quirky and unusual. He's been on a journey back through British history, combing our churches and churchyards for weird artefacts, investigating the items' histories and exploring the folklore attached to them.

His book features such oddities as 'witches' cauldrons', ships' figureheads marking sailors' graves, 1,000-year-old reindeer antlers still used in a day-long dance, and the skulls of saints from which pilgrims once sipped the waters of holy wells.

This fascinating book begins with an investigation of pagan artefacts before examining both human and animal relics. A tour of churchyards comes next, with weird tombs, ancient yew trees and evidence of body snatching. *Church Curiosities* then descends into the eerie netherworld of crypts and secret tunnels before looking into the strange histories of holy wells. After contemplating artefacts linked to folkloric rituals, the book rounds off with a general survey of church curiosities across the UK.

As a prize-winning author of gothic fiction and a blogger intrigued by the folkloric and strange, Castleton has long been fascinated by British history's more peculiar aspects. *Church Curiosities* – containing over 60 photographs – is an intriguing chronicle of this eccentric aspect of our distant past.

Main image: © Richard Ashy/CC by-SA 2.0

THE RUDSTON MONOLITH

All Saints' Churchyard, Rudston, East Yorkshire

This Neolithic/early Bronze Age monolith – Britain's tallest standing stone – may have been part of a 'ritual landscape' of barrows and henges. Legend claims the Devil hurled the monolith at the church or that it dropped from the clouds, flattening sinners desecrating the churchyard.

© Allan Harris/CC by 2.0

FUNERAL EFFIGY OF ROBERT

Marquess of Normanby, Westminster Abbey

Out of Westminster Abbey's collection of aristocratic funeral effigies, that of the three-year-old Robert, Marquess of Normanby, is probably the most poignant. He wears the finest clothes available in the early 1700s, with slits in his velvet robe for his toddler's reins.

© Ann Longmore-Etheridge/Public Domain

SHEELA-NA-GIG

Church of St Mary and St David, Kilpeck, Herefordshire

Some claim the Sheela-na-gig is a remnant of Celtic goddess worship; others maintain that, as Sheelas are generally found in Norman churches, they're not indigenous to Britain. Legend has it that Kilpeck Church once housed other obscene carvings, which were removed after a Victorian lady complained.

© Amanda Slater/CC by 2.0

PYRAMID TOMB OF MAD JACK

St Thomas a Beckett Churchyard, Brightling, Sussex

'Egyptomania' saw pyramids popping up in churchyards in Georgian and Victorian times. John 'Mad Jack' Fuller, an eccentric MP, is said to sit in his pyramid at a table set with a roast chicken and bottle of port so he won't suffer hunger or thirst come the Resurrection.

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FLYER FOR A GRISLY EXHIBIT (1799)

Roll up, roll up – it's the embalmed head of Cromwell!

Charles II had Oliver Cromwell's corpse dug up, hung on a gallows then decapitated. Cromwell's head had numerous owners over the centuries, including showmen, entrepreneurs and an actor who'd pass it around at alcohol-fuelled parties. The head was eventually buried in the chapel of Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge.

© Wikimedia/Public Domain

ROMAN LIGHTHOUSE

St Mary's Church, Dover Castle, Kent

This Roman lighthouse – or pharos – served as the church's belfry in the Middle Ages. The only surviving such structure in Britain, the pharos – built in AD 46 – guided ships on their way to Richborough harbour. Though the upper storey and battlements are medieval, the rest is Roman.

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BONE CRYPT

St Leonard's Church, Hythe, Kent

Containing around 8,000 femurs and 2,000 skulls, this underground ossuary houses remains from the 12th to 15th centuries. Some skulls bear marks of attacks with daggers and swords; others show evidence of trepanning, a primitive hole-boring surgery. Certain skulls are of Italian, Scandinavian and even African origin.

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THE EXECUTION BELL

St Sepulchre's Church, City of London

On the eve of an execution, the bellman of St Sepulchre's would walk to nearby Newgate Prison. At midnight, outside the condemned cells, he'd dolefully toll this handbell and recite a rhyme, urging the convicts to make peace with God.

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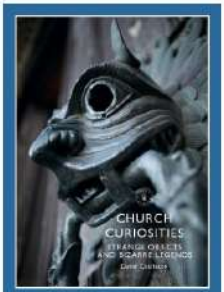


Church Curiosities: Strange Objects and Bizarre Legends

by David Castleton, published by Shire Publications, is out now priced £9.99

REVIEWS

The books, TV shows and films causing a stir in the history world this month

2x © Alamy

THE UNITED STATES VS. BILLIE HOLIDAY

Andra Day shines as the legendary jazz singer in this chaotic biopic

Certificate: 15 **Director:** Lee Daniels **Cast:** Andra Day, Trevante Rhodes, Garrett Hedlund **Released:** Out now

Billie Holiday's *Strange Fruit*, first recorded in 1939, is a protest song that graphically describes the lynching of Black Americans in the Southern United States. Bringing the horrors of racial violence to mainstream attention, it was deemed un-American by the United States government and led to attempts to silence Holiday.

Lee Daniels' *The United States vs. Billie Holiday* – which is based on the book *Chasing the Scream: The First and Last Days of the War on Drugs* by Johann Hari – concentrates on the last dozen years of Holiday's life as she's targeted by FBI agent Harry J Aslinger and the Federal Bureau of Narcotics.

As part of his 'war on drugs', Aslinger targets Holiday for her drug addiction, sending in Black federal agent Jimmy Fletcher to entrap her. However, Aslinger's real goal is to stop Holiday from performing and she is sent to jail for a year after being busted for drugs. Fletcher regrets his role in the sting and – on screen at least – falls in love with her.

Throughout the film, Holiday struggles with addiction, abusive relationships, segregation and racism. Celebrated for defiantly singing *Strange Fruit*, Holiday is also criticised for setting a bad example for other Black people with her arrest and drug use. After her imprisonment, she's stripped of the cabaret licence that allows her to perform in New York City clubs.

Following a failed attempt by Aslinger to set her up again for drug possession, she embarks on a tour of the United States. In 1959, a dying Holiday is admitted into hospital with cirrhosis of the liver, where Aslinger and his men arrest her after framing her for drug possession. She dies, aged just 44, while restrained to her hospital bed.

Unfortunately, the film's narrative is extremely muddled and it's hard to know what the main focus is supposed to be. Is it the issue of lynching and racism in the United States? Is it Holiday's bravery in choosing to perform, even when it puts her in danger? Or is it the many personal tragedies that she faces? Many scenes fail to make any sense thanks to choppy editing and it's difficult to keep track of the years, or who the various members of Holiday's entourage are.

Considering that Holiday is constantly pursued by Aslinger for singing *Strange Fruit*, it's disappointing that we don't learn much about the song itself or how popular it was with Black and White audiences alike. Yet we are given a powerful performance of the song by Andra Day, who invokes Holiday's voice and spirit in every scene.

It is no surprise that Day – in her debut film performance – won a Golden Globe and received an Academy Award nomination for her role. She delivers a raw, vulnerable and magnetic portrayal of Holiday that is undoubtedly the saving grace of this film. Although *The United States vs Billie Holiday* falls short, it nonetheless highlights Holiday's story as a courageous Black woman and civil rights icon. ***JL***

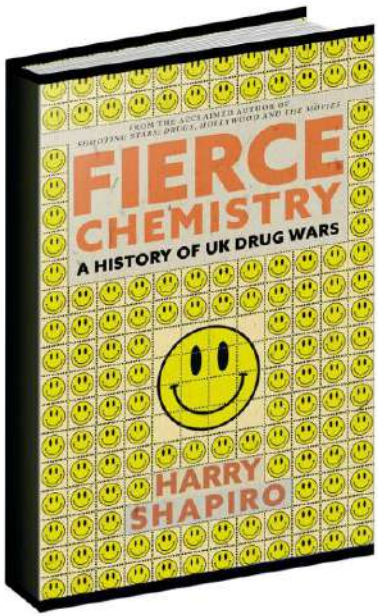
★★☆☆☆

Reviews by
Jessica Leggett, Callum McKelvie, Catherine Curzon

FIERCE CHEMISTRY
A HISTORY OF UK DRUG WARS

Britain's long battle with narcotics is an ugly trip

Author Harry Shapiro **Publisher** Amberley Publishing **Price** £20 **Released** Out now

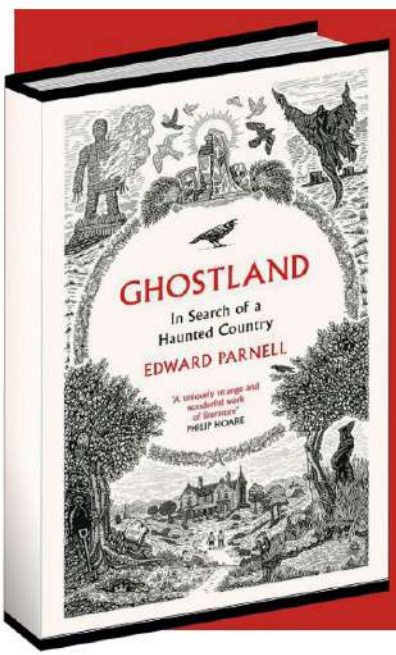


In *Fierce Chemistry: A History of UK Drug Wars*, Harry Shapiro charts a battle that has been waged for decades and across eras. In doing so, he weaves an intriguing tale of narcotics, crime, cash and politics that's often very shocking indeed.

Shapiro's book focuses on the United Kingdom, but places its narrative very clearly in an international and historical context. From the ancient spice road to the birth of worldwide trading routes, Shapiro opens the book with a brief history of the trade in stimulants from tobacco to alcohol, opium and beyond. With this solid historical context established, Shapiro embarks on an ambitious analysis of the history of narcotics in the UK, beginning over 100 years ago with concerns over Chinese opium and ending in 2020 with debates over drug use and legislation raging as fiercely as ever. In doing so, he tells a fascinating and eye-opening story in which narcotics such as heroin and cocaine, once heralded as miracle cures, became the centre of a bitter war that has yet to find a victor.

Drawing on a wide variety of resources including government archives, interviews and private documents, Shapiro's attempts to unravel the complex history of drugs in the UK have resulted in an immensely readable book. *Fierce Chemistry: A History of UK Drug Wars* should appeal to a wide readership, from history enthusiasts to those with an interest in more contemporary issues. It poses some very difficult questions, and doesn't shirk from telling what is sometimes an ugly, unvarnished truth. ***CC***

★★★★☆



GHOSTLAND

A haunting journey through the history of ghost stories

Author Edward Parnell **Publisher** William Collins **Price** £16.99 **Released** Out Now

Edward Parnell's *Ghostland: In Search of a Haunted Country* is part travel log, part history of Britain's ghosts and landscape, and part personal memoir. It's a deeply strange but incredibly rewarding read.

The breadth of topics covered really is impressive, with the contents page handily detailing the areas examined in each chapter. For example Chapter Five *Memento Mori* examines the Necropolis, the Bard of Ayrshire, the edge of the world, John Buchan, Robin Redbreast, Penda's Fen & Folk Horror and the Wicker Man. As this suggests, the book contains more facts on the macabre and morbid than you can shake a spook at.

Yet Parnell's intention is not simply to comprise a collection of facts and stories, instead he goes on a much deeper exploration of both supernatural literature and grief as well as examining the relationship between the various creators and their surrounding landscape. Parnell does this by detailing his own tragic loss and how, in that moment of grief, he returned to the tales of ghosts and ghouls from his youth.

Ghostland is a wonderful book and certainly a must for readers with a taste for the gothic. From Charles Dickens' 1865 rail disaster to Donald Pleasence voicing a ghostly figure in a children's public information film, the book is sure to have something for everyone, however morbid your tastes. ***CM***

★★★★★

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HISTORY WAR **RECOMMENDS...**

Barbarossa & The Bloodiest War In History

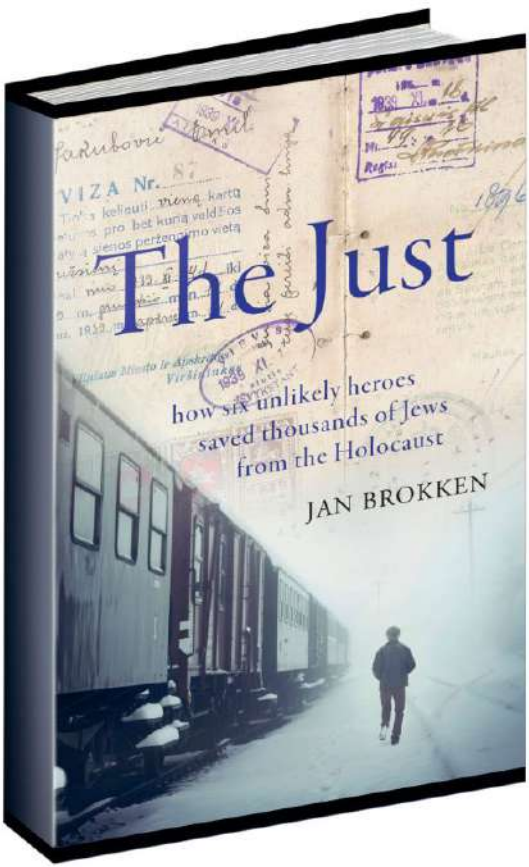
Author Stewart Binns **Price** £20 **Publisher** Headline

Binns brings compassion and intelligence to this account of the war that focuses on the conflict as a human tragedy for all those involved. Using mountains of testimony from eyewitnesses on the Soviet side, he takes the reader on a journey that starts with the unlikely alliance between Hitler and Stalin, and ends with the latter's eventual victory in the ruins of Berlin in May 1945.

THE JUST

An epic story of courage and survival

Author Jan Brokken, translated by David McKay **Publisher** Scribe UK **Price** £25 **Released** Out Now



"These unassuming heroes who saved so many lives have been largely forgotten"

In *The Just: How Six Unlikely Heroes Saved Thousands of Jews from the Holocaust*, Dutch author Jan Brokken tells a tale that is so remarkable as to be almost unbelievable. The fact that every word is true and the story is so little-known makes it a book that needs to be read. In this sensitive, compelling translation by David McKay, Brokken tells the story of Jan Zwartendijk, the Dutch consul in Lithuania, and a small group of friends who defied the Nazis and risked everything to save thousands of lives.

As desperate Jewish refugees in Kaunas, Lithuania, sought a means of escaping the Holocaust, the unassuming Zwartendijk hit upon a plan to issue visas that would allow them to travel to the Dutch colony of Curaçao in the southern Caribbean Sea. Over 10 days Zwartendijk and Japanese vice-consul Chiune Sugihara wrote out thousands of visas that allowed as many as 10,000 people to flee the Nazi regime. Zwartendijk and Sugihara worked for as many as 20 hours a day, churning out a month's worth of visas in each shift that guaranteed families safe passage to Curaçao. They would travel on the Trans-Siberian Express through Soviet Russia, through Japan and into China, from where they could undertake the final leg of the journey to safety. The visas were truly a life line, but after the war Zwartendijk and Sugihara were treated as pariahs by their own nations and the tale of their heroism went untold.

The Just is the book that Zwartendijk's deeds truly deserve. It's a painstaking reconstruction of a story that should not have been forgotten and that, thanks to Brokken's sensitivity and laser-focussed attention to detail, can now be told again. It's a story that requires an enormous cast of characters and a global canvas that might have been unwieldy in less assured hands, but which Brokken martials with ease.

The narrative is all the more remarkable because Zwartendijk was simply an ordinary man. Before the war he was the director of production at the Lithuanian offices of electronic company Philips, and in peacetime he returned to this role, working for Philips in the Netherlands until his retirement. A humble man, Zwartendijk spoke little of his wartime efforts and few who knew him were aware of what he had achieved. Sugihara, meanwhile, had his diplomatic career terminated after the war as a result of his actions in Lithuania.

Though they have been honoured by the Jewish community worldwide, the actions of these unassuming heroes who saved so many lives have been largely unknown. Brokker's book should change that, and it deserves to be read by the widest audience possible. It is an inspiring story of humanity, courage and hope in the darkest hours of the war. It is profoundly moving and a story that should be told again and again as a reminder of the remarkable and lasting impact that even a handful of people can have. ***CC***

★★★★★

HISTORY VS HOLLYWOOD

Fact versus fiction on the silver screen

CLEOPATRA

Director: Joseph L Mankiewicz **Starring:** Elizabeth Taylor, Richard Burton, Rex Harrison **Country:** Egypt **Released:** 1963

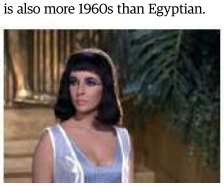
A historic Hollywood epic, but did it get the facts straight?

VERDICT: Visually it veers from facts, but the story holds together

01 The early part of the film concentrates on Caesar as he chases down his adversary Pompey to Egypt only to be presented with his head by the young pharaoh Ptolemy XIII. As shown in the film, Caesar was disgusted by this treatment of a respected Roman.

02 Cleopatra first gets to meet Caesar by being hidden inside a rolled up carpet and being brought to his private chambers. She later witnesses him experience an epileptic fit. These elements come from the writing of Plutarch and Suetonius respectively.

03 The film makes a big point of Cleopatra's Greek heritage, which goes some way to excuse Taylor's casting as an Egyptian. Modern historians believe her heritage would have been much more mixed. Her fashion in the film is also more 1960s than Egyptian.



04 A large omission from the film is any reference to the children Cleopatra and Mark Antony had together. While her son with Julius Caesar is prominent, she had boy and girl twins with Antony, followed by a further son later.

05 During the Battle of Actium the film shows Antony leaving the conflict to chase after Cleopatra as she appears to depart on her ship, abandoning his men to die. This is more or less how Plutarch described events, so it sticks to the history here.

Main image: © Alamy
Sx inset image source: Disney Plus

Did you know?
The word 'tiropita' translates to 'cheese pie' in English

Main image: © Alamy
Inset image: © wiki/ Hugh Ross Williams

TIROPITA

A TRADITIONAL GREEK FAVOURITE , GREECE, C. 2ND CENTURY CE – PRESENT

Ingredients

- 12 sheets filo pastry, defrosted
- 3 eggs
- 500g feta cheese
- 1 tsp black pepper
- Olive oil

Optional

- 250g ricotta or cottage cheese

The origins of tiropita, a popular Greek cheese-and-egg filled pie, are still debated. Pies have been a traditional part of Greek cuisine since ancient times and tiropita is possibly derived from placenta cake, a sweet honey and cheese dessert loved by both the ancient Greeks and Romans. In the 2nd century CE, plakountas tetyromenous – 'cheesy placenta' – was mentioned in *Oneirocritica*, the treatise written by the diviner Artemidorus. Often eaten for breakfast, tiropita is an affordable dish that can be made with a variety of cheeses and types of pastry, with families passing down their own recipes for generations. However, a classic tiropita is typically made with feta cheese and flaky filo pastry.

METHOD

01 Preheat oven to 180°C. Grease a baking sheet with olive oil and line with baking parchment.

02 Crack your eggs into a bowl, add the black pepper and a tablespoon of oil, then beat together. There's no need to add extra salt to this recipe, as feta cheese is salty enough.

03 Using your hands, crumble the feta cheese into a bowl. If you want your tiropitas to be creamier, feel free to add in ricotta or cottage cheese.

04 Pour the egg mixture into the bowl and mix until it is fully combined with the cheese.

05 To make tiropita triangles, spread out one sheet of filo pastry and lightly brush with olive oil. Cut this sheet into four strips lengthwise. Place around one to 1½ teaspoons of the cheese and egg mixture in the top-left corner of each filo strip.

06 Fold the corner over to make a triangle, then continue folding from side to side until the end of the strip. Place each finished triangle on the baking sheet and repeat this process until you've used up all of the cheese mixture.

07 Lightly brush each triangle with olive oil and then bake your tiropitas for 15 to 20 minutes, until they're golden brown. Serve immediately with a side salad.

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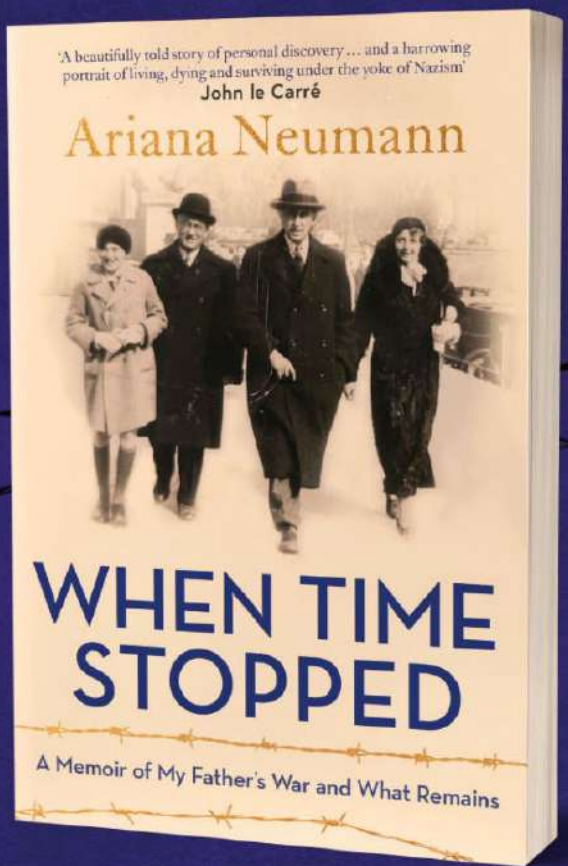
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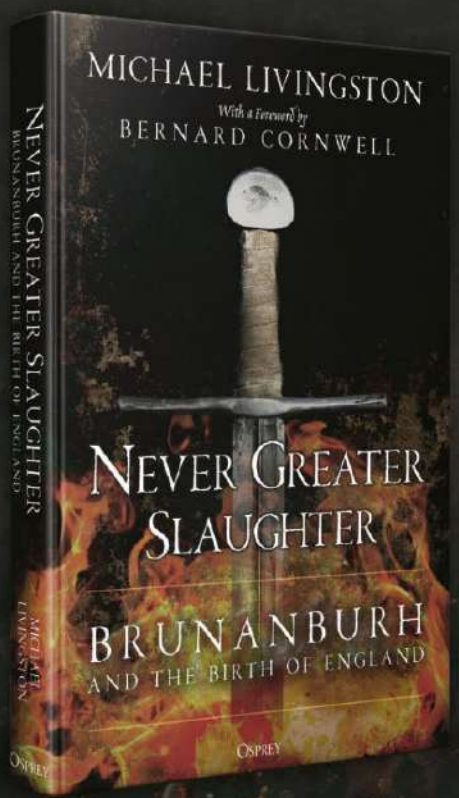

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